THE PIRATE'S PROGRESS

A SHORT HISTORY OF THE U-BOAT

BY

WILLIAM ARCHER

HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
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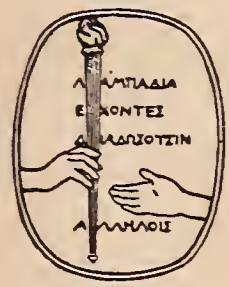

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	Preface	vii
	Introductory	xi
1.	The U-Boat as a Legitimate Weapon of War	1
2.	First Attacks upon Merchant Ships	10
3.	The Announcement of the First "Blockade"	15
4.	The *Asturias* to the *Falaba*	22
5.	The *Lusitania*	29
6.	The *Armenian* to the *Persia*	40
7.	America and the *Sussex*	52
8.	Minor Barbarities	61
9.	Murder by Submersion	78
10.	Hospital Ships and Relief Ships	86
	Conclusion	101

PREFACE

THE annals of the sea contain many stories of disaster, from the loss of the *White Ship* to the sinking of the *Titanic* and the *Empress of Ireland*. We have all been accustomed from childhood to read with deep emotion the accounts of historic shipwrecks, the tragic details condensed by Byron into the stanza:

> Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell,
> Then shrieked the timid and stood still the brave,
> Then some leaped overboard with dreadful yell,
> As eager to anticipate their grave;
> And the sea yawned around her like a hell,
> And down she sucked with her the whirling wave,
> As one who grapples with his enemy,
> And strives to strangle him before he die.

Even more terrible than the stories of the disasters themselves are the accounts of the agonies endured by survivors drifting helplessly on rafts or in open boats, and dying, one by one, of hunger, thirst, and exposure. These things cannot but haunt the imagination, especially of a seafaring race. There have been those

who have been tempted to question the beneficence of the Power which brings to pass, or permits, such horrors as have frequently been enacted on the treacherous sea.

But until the present war broke out it had occurred to no one to imagine that disasters due to "the act of God" would ever be reduplicated with cold deliberation by the act of man. Who could have conceived, at midsummer, 1914, that more destruction to the world's merchant shipping, and suffering to harmless seamen and passengers, would be caused within the next three years by the calculated policy of a so-called civilised power, than had been attributable in a century to perils naturally incident to the lives of those who go down to the sea in ships? This is the phenomenon with which we are face to face to-day—the callousness of man far outstripping in its ravages the heedless destructiveness of natural forces. It is an appalling picture, and one well calculated to give the final touch of bitterness to that loathing of the German idol — War — with which Germany has made it her business to inspire all reasonable men.

The following pages contain a sketch of the gradual decline, in Germany's employment of the U-boat, from honourable to dishonourable, and finally to atrocious, uses. The time has not yet come for an exhaustive history of her piratical

career. Only a few of its more conspicuous episodes are here briefly recorded, but sufficient to show to what depths of infamy she has been dragged down by a false philosophy playing into the hands of an overweening national egoism.

INTRODUCTORY

WHEN war broke out in August, 1914, the value of the submarine was as yet untested. It was practically a new weapon. At the time of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904 it was not sufficiently developed to play any part. Its probable influence on naval warfare had, of course, been the subject of eager speculation, but with no guidance from experience. Some authorities—among whom was Admiral Sir Percy Scott—thought that the "introduction of vessels that swim under water had entirely done away with the utility of the ships that swim on the top of the water." To many people in England, at the beginning of the war, this was a very disquieting doctrine; for, though our strength in submarines was great, it was manifest that the submarine could not fight the submarine, and, if a few undersea boats could destroy or paralyse a great battle fleet, it was possible that the Navy on which we so implicitly relied for the safety of our shores, and for our power to carry on the war, might prove a broken reed.

Events soon proved the baselessness of this apprehension. The submarine, at all events in its then stage of development, had made no revolution in naval warfare. Legitimately used as a fighting instrument, it was effective and formidable, but very far from all-powerful. The early successes of the German U-boats cost us the lives of many gallant seamen, and gave landsmen some uneasy moments. But neither in battle nor in the "war of attrition" did the submarine play anything like the determining part which had been predicted for it. Not until it had proved wholly indecisive as a factor in honourable warfare did Germany conceive the hope of reaching a decision in her favour by employing the U-boat as an instrument of ruthless piracy.

Let us briefly review the legitimate exploits of the German undersea fleet, before passing on to the immeasurably longer catalogue of its crimes.

THE
PIRATE'S PROGRESS

THE PIRATE'S PROGRESS

I

THE U-BOAT AS A LEGITIMATE WEAPON OF WAR

SOME people had imagined that the very beginning of the war would be signalised by some spectacular submarine enterprise on one side or the other. Nothing of the sort took place. It is true that on August 9 U-boats attempted an attack on the British first light cruiser squadron; but its only result was the loss of one of the assailants, the U 15, which was sunk by H.M.S. *Birmingham*. The war was a month old when the U-boats drew first blood. On September 5 the light cruiser *Pathfinder*, 2,940 tons, built in 1904, was sunk off the Isle of May at the entrance to the Firth of Forth by the U 2, commanded by First-Lieutenant Hersing. The *Pathfinder* carried a complement of 268 officers and men, and there was considerable loss of life.

A little more than a fortnight later occurred an event which seemed for a moment to justify the high hopes which the German people had been taught to entertain as to the possibilities of a "war of attrition." At 6.30 A.M. on September 22, the armoured cruisers *Aboukir*, *Hogue*, and *Cressy*, on patrol duty in the North Sea, had just separated to take up their day stations, three miles apart, when the *Aboukir* "was seen to reel violently, and then settle down with a list to port." Her consorts obeyed the natural impulse to close in upon her and attempt to save life. They were within about a quarter of a mile of her, the *Hogue* on the starboard bow and the *Cressy* on the other side, when two tremendous crashes were heard in close succession, and the *Hogue* "leapt up like a rowelled horse and quivered all over, just as a steel spring will quiver when firmly held at one end and sharply struck at the other." The *Cressy*, meanwhile, had opened fire on the insidious assailant, but without effect; for a few minutes later she herself was struck amidships by two torpedoes, and sank almost immediately. Two Dutch ships and a Lowestoft trawler did good work in helping to rescue 60 officers and 777 men; but an equal number of officers and some 1,400 men were drowned. This loss of life was by far the most serious feature of the incident. The cruisers themselves, which were sister ships

of 12,000 tons apiece, had been built about the beginning of the century, and were rapidly becoming obsolete.

The jubilation in Germany was naturally great, and Otto Weddigen, the commander who had brought off this skilful and highly successful exploit, was for some time a national hero of the first rank. He was rewarded not only with the Iron Cross, but with the order "*Pour le Mérite.*" It is pleasant to add that his distinguished ability was not his only merit. He afterwards gained a high reputation for his humane treatment of the crews of merchant ships, who nicknamed him "the polite pirate." His boat, the U 29, was sunk in the spring of 1915.

Could such exploits have been repeated in any number, there might have been some hope of achieving the aim of German strategy, and so reducing the naval strength of Britain as to enable Germany to encounter her on the high seas with a fair chance of success. Unfortunately for Von Tirpitz's calculations, Weddigen's swoop has remained unique. More important ships have, indeed, fallen victims to the submarine, but only at long intervals; and there has been no repetition of "three birds falling to one gun." That result, indeed, was attained in the present instance only because the *Hogue* and *Cressy* subordinated sound tactics to humanity, and thought more of saving life than of assur-

ing their own safety. The Admiralty issued orders to prevent the repetition of this generous error, stating that the rule which obtains in actual battle must be extended to such occasions—namely, that each unit must look after itself.

On October 15, 1914, a small and obsolete cruiser, the *Hawke*, was torpedoed in the North Sea, and sank in ten minutes, about 70 of the officers and crew being saved. The *Hawke* had a displacement of 7,350 tons, and was built in 1889. This completes the record of U-boat successes for 1914, so far as attacks on the British Navy are concerned.

The roll of legitimate successes for 1915 is naturally much longer. It begins with the sinking in the Channel, on January 1, of the *Formidable*, a battleship of 15,000 tons, built in 1901. The night was stormy, the sea ran high, and, being struck by two torpedoes, she settled down very rapidly. Some boats were launched, however, and 201 officers and men were saved out of a complement of between 700 and 800. The occupants of one boat were rescued with great bravery and skill by a Brixham smack, the *Provident*, W. Pillar, master. Lord Crewe said in the House of Lords on January 7: "I should like to tell the House that, after the *Formidable* was struck, her captain signalled to another ship that she was not to stand by, but to keep off,

s he believed that there was a submarine in he neighbourhood."

On March 11, an auxiliary cruiser (armed nerchantman), the *Bayano*, was sunk at the ntrance to the Firth of Clyde. She went down n three minutes, and only 30 lives were saved ut of about 200.

Exactly a month later the transport *Way-arer* was torpedoed, but did not sink, and was eached at Queenstown.

On May 1 the destroyer *Recruit* (385 tons) was sunk in the North Sea, 4 officers and 21 men being saved and 39 lost.

Perhaps the most important of all the U-boat exploits occurred on May 26 and 27, when the battleships *Triumph* and *Majestic* were sunk off Gallipoli. The *Triumph* was a ship of 11,800 tons, built in 1904; the *Majestic*, built in 1895, displaced 14,900 tons. The ships were not of great value, the *Majestic* especially being at the very end of her period of service; and in each case the loss of life was small. Nevertheless, it may fairly be said that the appearance of U-boats on the scene marked the turning-point of the Gallipoli expedition. They very seriously reduced its chances of success; and this may be reckoned the most important strategic result they have achieved, apart, of course, from their conspicuous triumph in bringing America into the war.

On June 10 two torpedo-boats or "coastal destroyers," the *Greenfly* and the *Mayfly*, of 215 tons apiece, were sunk in the North Sea. Thirty-one lives were saved and between 20 and 30 lost.

Ten days later the *Roxburgh*, a 10,000 ton cruiser, was struck by a torpedo in the North Sea, but was not seriously damaged.

On June 30 the destroyer *Lightning* (275 tons) was torpedoed. She was brought into harbour, but 14 of her crew were missing.

On August 8 the auxiliary cruiser *India* was torpedoed off Bodö, in Norwegian territorial waters. Twenty-two officers and 120 men were saved, but 10 officers and 150 men lost their lives.

In the Ægean on August 14 a very serious disaster occurred. The *Royal Edward*, transport (11,117 tons), was sent to the bottom, and carried with her about 1,000 men, 600 being saved.

In the same waters, on September 2, the transport *Southland* was torpedoed, but reached Mudros under her own steam. The explosion, however, led to the loss of about 30 lives.

The transport *Ramazan* was sunk by shell fire on September 19, off the island of Antikythera. There were 385 Indian troops on board, of whom 75 were saved.

In October the transport *Marquette* was sunk

in the Ægean; and in the Mediterranean, on November 3, the transport *Mercian* was shelled but not sunk. There was, however, a casualty list of nearly 100 killed and wounded.

On November 5, the *Tara*, an "armed boarding steamer," was attacked by two U-boats and sunk in the Bay of Sollum, on the frontier between Egypt and Tripoli. Ten men of the crew were missing, having fallen into the hands of the Senussya tribe (or sect) of Arabs, from whom they were rescued, with other captives, in the following March. At the same place (apparently on the following day) the *Prince Abbas* (300 tons) and the *Abdul Moneim* (450 tons) were sunk. They were described by the Germans as "Anglo-Egyptian gunboats," but by the British as small custom cruisers of no fighting value.

In the following year, 1916, the list of legitimate U-boat achievements is only about half as long, and includes only one really notable incident. On August 19 it was reported that the German High Seas Fleet had put to sea, and two light cruisers which set forth in search of it were torpedoed. They were the *Nottingham*, of 5,400 tons, built in 1914, and the *Falmouth*, of 5,250 tons, built in 1911. The remaining losses were as follows:

The *Primula*, mine-sweeper, sunk on March 1, in the Eastern Mediterranean, 3 lives lost.

The *Lassoo*, destroyer, torpedoed (or mined) on April 13, off the Dutch coast, 6 lives lost.

The *Clacton*, mine-sweeper, sunk on August 3, in the Levant, 6 lives lost.

The *Duke of Albany*, armed boarding steamer, sunk on August 24, in the North Sea, 24 lives lost.

The *Zaida*, armed yacht, sunk in the Gulf of Alexandretta. Date uncertain; 10 lives lost.

The *Franconia*, engaged in transport duty, but carrying no troops at the time, sunk on October 4, 12 lives lost.

The *Genista*, mine-sweeper, sunk. (Reported in *Times*, October 27.)

The *Russian*, an empty transport, sunk. (Reported in *Times*, December 19.)

To this list might be added a certain number of successful attacks by German or Austrian submarines upon French, Italian, or Russian naval units, but the roll is comparatively short.

It appears, then, that as an instrument of "attrition," and even as a means of harassing maritime lines of communication, the submarine was far indeed from fulfilling German—or even English—expectation. In two years and a half it reckoned among its victims no "capital ships," and, so far as the British Navy was concerned, only eight vessels of any considerable importance—the *Aboukir*, *Hogue*, *Cressy*, *Formidable*, *Triumph*, *Majestic*, *Nottingham*, *Falmouth*.

It played, as we have seen, a conspicuous —perhaps a determining—part in defeating the Allied attack upon Gallipoli; but, on the other hand, we find scarcely any trace of the intervention of submarines in the Battle of Jutland. In their action against transports the U-boats had some success—not at the vital point, namely, the English Channel, but in the Mediterranean. When we consider, however, how many millions of troops have been conveyed by sea for distances aggregating hundreds of thousands of miles, we realise that the percentage of losses due to submarine action has been absolutely infinitesimal. It is true, no doubt, that the military value of the submarine is not to be measured by the positive losses it inflicts, but rather by a factor impossible to estimate with any certainty—its deterrent effect upon potential enemy action. Even in this respect, however, the mine is probably the more formidable weapon of the two. We may say safely that, taking it all round, the submarine, as a fighting instrument, has proved a disappointment.

It was on realising its inability to contribute on any decisive scale to the defeat of the Allied Navies that the German Government determined to use it as an instrument of sheer destruction, and to conduct a reckless and ruthless campaign against Allied, and ultimately against neutral, commerce.

II

FIRST ATTACKS UPON MERCHANT SHIPS

IT took Germany some six months to make up her mind to the systematic employment of her U-boats as commerce-destroyers. During those six months (August, 1914—January, 1915, inclusive) a good deal of harm was done to Allied shipping by a few warships which had been at large at the outbreak of hostilities, notably by the *Emden* in the Indian Ocean. The proceedings of these ships were, if not incontestably legal, at least plausibly defensible under international law. It is true that they constantly sank their prizes instead of taking them into port to have their status determined by a Prize Court; but it is generally admitted that the destruction of a prize is permissible when circumstances render it dangerous or impracticable to bring it into harbour; and as practically all Germany's oversea harbours had been seized very early in the war, it is manifest that there was neither port nor Prize Court within the raiders' reach. The right to sink

captured ships is limited by the imperative condition that the captor "must make due provision for the safety of passengers and crew, and for the preservation of the ship's papers"; and this condition the raiders honourably observed. Captain Müller, of the *Emden*, collected the crews and passengers of a number of prizes on board a single vessel, which he then set free.

A few isolated instances of submarine attacks on merchant shipping occurred in this period, but only one was marked by gross inhumanity.

The first commercial victim was the steamship *Glitra*, from Grangemouth to Stavanger, which was stopped by a U-boat about noon on October 20, 1914, nine miles S.W. of Skudesnæs. A boat's crew of 5 men boarded the steamer, and when the captain lowered the British flag the German officer tore it up and trampled upon it. The "Gott strafe England" craze was then, it will be remembered, at its height. The crew were allowed ten minutes to take to their boats, and then the ship was sunk, it is believed by opening the bottom valves. The *Hamburger Nachrichten* described this exploit as "a brisk Viking-stroke."

On November 23 the *Malachite* was held up in Havre roadstead, the crew were allowed ten minutes to leave the ship, and it was then sunk

by shell fire. Three days later (November 26) the *Primo* was sunk off Cape Antifer. In neither of these cases was the crew exposed to any serious danger.

Very different was the case of the *Amiral Ganteaume*. This passenger ship, bound from Calais to Havre, with 2,500 refugees on board, was wantonly torpedoed, without a moment's warning, twelve miles from Cape Grisnez. The Channel passenger steamer *Queen* ranged up alongside of the stricken ship, and "with great resourcefulness and daring" took off most of the passengers. About 50, however, lost their lives. That the disaster was not due to a mine was proved by the discovery of a fragment of a torpedo in the hull of the ship, which did not ultimately sink. This was the first of the German maritime outrages, and it was no fault of the perpetrators that it was not also the worst. Had the torpedo taken full effect, the death-roll would have been longer than that of the *Lusitania*. The attack was without a shadow of excuse. What military purpose could be served by sinking a passenger ship bound from one French port to another, and manifestly (for the incident took place in broad daylight) crowded with civilians? Whoever was responsible for the attack, which took place on October 26, was clearly animated by the sheer lust of murder which is awakened in so many Germans

by the sight of defenceless enemies. The sailor who commanded the unknown U-boat was a true brother-in-arms of the soldiers who, a few weeks earlier, had marched burning and massacring through Belgium.

On January 22, 1915, the steamship *Durward* was stopped by a U-boat about thirteen miles from the lightship *Maas*. The crew was ordered to take to the boats, no time being allowed for the removal of their private belongings. The submarine then towed the boats to a certain distance, ordered them to wait there while it sank the ship, and then towed them onwards in the direction of the lightship. A week later (January 30) two ships, the *Ben Cruachan* and the *Linda Blanche*, were sunk, in both cases with reasonable consideration for the safety of the crews. The men of the *Ben Cruachan* were given ten minutes to leave the ship, the German officer, who spoke "perfect English," bidding them "get as many of their belongings together as they could." The ship was sunk by bombs. In the case of the *Linda Blanche*, the men on board the submarine "handed cigars and cigarettes to the crew" as they took to their boats. Deliberate inhumanity had not yet developed into a system, though the *Kölnische Zeitung*, about the middle of the month, had published an article declaring that "in future German submarines and aircraft would wage war against British

mercantile vessels without troubling themselves in any way about the fate of the crews." This was evidently an inspired forecast, and it was to be promptly and amply justified by events.

III

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FIRST "BLOCKADE"

A FEW days before Christmas, 1914, Grand Admiral von Tirpitz granted an interview to the representative of the United Press of America, which very clearly indicated that Germany was already planning a submarine "blockade" of the British Islands. "America," he said, "has not raised her voice in protest, and has done little or nothing against the closing of the North Sea to neutral shipping by England. What would America say if Germany should declare a submarine war against all enemy trading vessels?" By the "closing of the North Sea" he meant the measure to which Britain had been driven by the German practice of indiscriminate mine-sowing under neutral flags. In the interests of neutral as well as British shipping, the Government had announced on November 3, not that the North Sea was "closed," but that a safe passage through it would be kept open for all neutral ships en-

tering and leaving it by way of the Straits of Dover. It was only the northern passage between the Hebrides and the Faroe Islands that was closed, in the sense that vessels using it must do so at their peril.

On January 26, 1915, it was announced that the German Federal Council had decided to take under its control all the stocks of corn and flour in the country, on and from February 1. It was at once anticipated that this measure would cause the British Government to regard all cargoes of foodstuffs destined for Germany as consigned to the German Government, and therefore contraband of war. The Germans afterwards tried to represent their attempted blockade as a measure of retaliation against this action of the British Government; but, to say nothing of the fact that the blockade had been threatened by Von Tirpitz six weeks earlier, it was definitely announced before the British Government had taken any step whatever. The notification of the intended blockade was issued in Berlin on February 4; not until the following day did the British Foreign Office announce that the Government was considering what steps it should take in view of the German commandeering of foodstuffs.

It so happened that, on January 23, a steamship named the *Wilhelmina* had cleared from New York for Hamburg, conveying a cargo o

ood shipped by an American firm, and consigned to an American citizen in Germany. The oreign Office note of February 5 ran as follows: If the destination and cargo of the *Wilhelmina* re as supposed, the cargo will, if the vessel is ntercepted, be submitted to a Prize Court in rder that the new situation created by the erman decree may be examined, and a decision eached upon it after full consideration." This ourse was, in fact, pursued, and it was determined that the action of the German Government in taking foodstuffs under its exclusive ontrol justified the Allies in treating all provisions consigned to Germany as contraband of ar. But it is clearly absurd to represent as a esult of this British measure a U-boat campaign hich had been formally announced while the ritish Government was still considering its ourse of action, and before it had issued any tatement whatever on the subject.

The German proclamation ran thus:

The waters round Great Britain and Ireland, including the English Channel, are hereby proclaimed a war region.

On and after February 18th every enemy merchant vessel found in this region will be destroyed, without its always being possible to warn the crews or passengers of the dangers threatening.

Neutral ships will also incur danger in the war region, where, in view of the misuse of neutral flags ordered by the British Government, and incidents inevitable in sea warfare, attacks intended for hostile ships may affect neutral ships also.

The sea passage to the north of the Shetland Island and the eastern region of the North Sea in a zone of least 30 miles along the Netherlands coast, are n menaced by any danger.

(Signed) Berlin, February 4th,

VON POHL,

Chief of Marine Staff.

It will be seen that the warfare here threat ened differs from the "unlimited" warfare o two years later in the position assigned to neu tral shipping. Neutrals are warned that the had better avoid the "war region," but it i indicated that if they are attacked it will onl be by mistake, and that, for these mistakes they will have to blame the nefarious policy o the British Government with regard to the us of neutral flags.

There was not a single point at which thi proclamation did not fly in the face of inter national law as stated by all jurists and a interpreted by all courts.

The use of a neutral flag by a vessel attempt ing to elude capture has always been held legiti mate. Attacking under false colours is rightl prohibited—but that is a totally different matter

The warship which doubts the genuinenes of the flag displayed by a merchantman can pu the matter to the test by exercising its unques tioned right of "visit and search." Thus th mistakes with which neutrals were threatene were mistakes which had no right to happen

As for the avowed intention of attacking enemy ships without warning (for nothing else was implied in the impudent phrase "without its being always possible to warn," etc.), it stood in flagrant contravention of every accepted principle and of all civilised practice. We have already seen, in discussing the case of the *Emden* and other raiders, that the sinking of prizes had hitherto been regarded as a measure to be resorted to only in the most exceptional circumstances. Here are some pronouncements of German authorities on the point:

> GESSNER: As a general rule, the captor may not scuttle or otherwise destroy the prize he has taken in the open sea. He may do so, however, on his own responsibility, in circumstances of *force majeure.*
>
> HEFFTER: The destruction of an enemy prize is not justifiable except in case of extreme necessity.
>
> BLUNTSCHLI: As a rule, enemy prizes must be taken into the captor's port for adjudication. Destruction is permissible only in case of absolute necessity. *The blockade of the captor's port does not in itself constitute a case of absolute necessity.**

Germany now claimed the right to make a universal rule of what had hitherto been sanctioned only as a rare exception, arguing that the

* *See* Sir Frederick Smith: *Destruction of Merchant Ships,* pp. 28, 29.

submarine had created a new situation which had not been anticipated at the time when international law took shape. That was, it is true, an arguable point, and it was natural that Germany should decline to be bound by so strict a reading of existing regulations as would have made her U-boats entirely powerless as a weapon against the commerce of her enemies. But she not only resolved to sink every enemy ship that came in her way; she made up her mind to do so without that preliminary visit and search which had hitherto been held indispensable, and especially without taking those measures for the security of non-combatant crews and passengers which had been regarded as the most imperative of obligations. Here, she could allege no excuse in the nature of *force majeure*. It was perfectly possible for her to act humanely, as one or two of her commanders proved. By doing so she might to some extent have reduced the effectiveness of her campaign of havoc; but she would have had her reward in retaining some shred of the respect of the civilised world. Her disregard of every consideration of humanity was exactly on a level with her frequent use, in Belgium and Northern France, of civilian screens to mask an infantry advance.* Such practices are defensible only on the theory that Germany

* Indignantly disclaimed by Von Moltke, but established by irrefutable evidence.

must forgo no possible advantage, of however dastardly a nature—the theory, indeed, which her War-Book indicates almost without disguise, and on which she has consistently acted in every domain of warlike activity. But in her U-boat campaign, as in her treatment of Belgium, she has exceeded even the brutality which her theory demands. We shall have to record many deeds of a callous cruelty from which no appreciable advantage was to be reaped—deeds which betray in their perpetrators a positive delight in murder for its own sake.

IV

THE "ASTURIAS" TO THE "FALABA"

FEBRUARY, 1915, opened with an attempt to torpedo the hospital-ship *Asturias*, which fortunately failed. We shall have to speak more at length of this incident when the time comes to chronicle the deliberate and systematic war upon hospital-ships. For the present it remained an isolated and motiveless crime, which may be bracketed with the attack on the *Amiral Ganteaume*, as showing the reckless ferocity which was beginning to prevail among the U-boat commanders.

The "blockade," as we have seen, was proclaimed on February 4, but a fortnight's grace was allowed to neutrals to clear out of the "war region," and leave the British to their fate. As a matter of fact, nothing of great importance occurred during this fortnight.

On February 19, the day after the expiry of the period of grace, the Norwegian oil-steamer *Belridge* was torpedoed off Beachy Head, but managed to reach port. On the following day

there were two victims: the *Cambank* was torpedoed without warning, while the crew of the *Downshire* were allowed five minutes to take to their boats. On the 23rd the *Oakly*, and on the 24th the *Deptford*, were torpedoed without warning. The 24th, too, witnessed the sinking of the *Harpalion*. The entire absence of warning is apparent from the account of the attack given by the second officer, Mr. Harper: "We had just sat down to tea, and the chief engineer was saying grace. He had just uttered the words, 'For what we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful,' when there came an awful crash. I never saw such a smash as it caused." There is a certain grim humour in the situation, which, however, the sailors do not appear to have appreciated.

Mr. Asquith stated in the House of Commons on March 1 that the lawless submarine war was about to be met by a tightening of the stranglehold upon Germany; and an Order-in-Council of March 11 made the definite announcement in the following terms:

> His Majesty has decided to adopt further measures in order to prevent commodities of any kind from reaching or leaving Germany, though such measures will be enforced without risk to neutral ships or to neutral or non-combatant life, and in strict observance of the dictates of humanity.

Two days earlier (March 9) three ships, the *Tangistan*, *Blackwood*, and *Princess Victoria*, had been torpedoed off Scarborough, Hastings, and Liverpool respectively. In no case was any warning given, and of the crew of the *Tangistan* —38 in number—only one was saved.

On March 11 (the date of the Order-in-Council) Commander Otto Weddigen makes his last appearance on the scene. From the small U 9 with which he sank the three cruisers, he had been transferred to a much more powerful craft, the U 29. On this day, off the Casquet rocks, he sank the steamer *Aden-wen*, but gave the crew ten minutes to take to their boats, observing, "We wish no lives to be lost." He also provided a dry suit for a sailor who had fallen into the water, thus acting up to the nickname which he had earned of "the polite pirate." He had, unfortunately, only a few days more of life before him. On March 26 the Admiralty announced that U 29 had been sunk. "There seems to be no doubt," said *The Times*, "that Captain Weddigen's career has now come to an end, with that of his new boat. Our satisfaction at the occurrence is mingled with some regret at the death of a man who, so far as is known, behaved bravely and skilfully, and where it was possible displayed to his victims the humanity expected of seamen, but which has not been characteristic of all his brother officers."

This is almost the last good word that has to be, or can be, said for German conduct at sea. It is true that on March 13, a few days before Weddigen lost his life, some humanity had been shown in the sinking of the collier *Hartdale*. The boats got off, but the captain, chief officer, steward, and a boy remained on board until the ship was awash. The boy was unfortunately drowned, but the three men were taken on board the submarine and were well treated. Ultimately, they were transferred to the Swedish steamship *Heimdal*, which had taken the boats in tow. It is also related that in the course of the summer, when attacks upon fishing boats were the order of the day, and when many fishermen were brutally done to death without being given a chance for their lives, a welcome exception to the general practice occurred when the commander of one submarine allowed the crew of a trawler he attacked to get away in their boat. "We are not Prussians," he declared to the skipper; "it is only the Prussians who would let you drown." At sea as on land, unfortunately, the Prussians were enormously in the majority.

The *Atlanta* was sunk on March 14, and the *Fingal* on the 15th. In the latter case there was a death-roll of six, including the chief mate and the stewardess, who is said to have been the first woman victim of the submarine war. On

March 25 the Dutch steamship *Medea* was deliberately sunk by gunfire off Beachy Head. The crew, however, were all saved. Two days later the *Aguila* was sunk by the same method. The crew were nominally given four minutes to leave the ship, but the submarine opened fire while the boats were being launched, killing the chief engineer, the boatswain, and a donkeyman, and wounding the third engineer and several seamen. A member of the crew said that one boat contained ten men, the stewardess, and one woman passenger. As it was being launched the passenger cried out, "I'm shot!" and fell over the edge of the gunwale next to the ship's side. The next moment heavy seas capsized the boat, and neither passenger nor stewardess was ever seen again. The Germans, however, were not entirely callous, for they told the trawler *Ottilie* where the boats had been left, and enabled her to find them. On the same day, March 27, the steamer *Vosges* was sunk by shell fire after a two hours' chase, the chief engineer being killed.

The following day, Sunday, March 28, witnessed the first U-boat atrocity on a grand scale. The Elder-Dempster liner *Falaba*, Liverpool to South Africa, was just passing out of St. George's Channel when she was pursued by a submarine. Seeing that escape was hopeless, the captain stopped. "There is some doubt," says *The*

Times, "about the exact number of minutes' grace accorded by the German commander, but it is agreed that well within ten minutes the *Falaba* was torpedoed at 100 yards range, when the enemy could not fail to see that the deck was still crowded and the first boat was actually half-way down the davits. The torpedo struck near the engine-room, and the *Falaba* sank rapidly. The callousness of the attack was aggravated by the conduct of the Germans when their victims were struggling in the water. As they raised their arms, reaching out for life-buoys or scraps of wreckage, the Germans looked on and laughed, and answered their cries for help with jeers. This charge of inhumanity is not founded on any isolated allegation. It is the definite testimony of some half-dozen survivors." The captain was not drowned, but died of exposure.

Among the victims—111 in number—was an American citizen, Mr. Leon Chester Thrasher. This naturally intensified the indignation felt in America, and it was already foreseen in many quarters that if Germany persisted in so reckless a disregard of the rights not only of non-combatants, but of neutrals, the traditional aloofness of America could not be permanently maintained. "The sinking of the *Falaba*," said the New York *Times*, "is perhaps the most shocking crime of the war." Though less wanton and

purposeless than the attack on the *Amiral Ganteaume*, it was equally cruel in intention and more disastrous in effect. It proved beyond all question that the spirit of modern Germany was as ruthlessly inhuman at sea as on land; but the world had not long to wait for still more startling evidence to the same effect.

V

THE "LUSITANIA"

HITHERTO we have followed with some minuteness the record of German submarine activities, in order to trace the gradual decline from legitimate and honourable warfare to indiscriminate maritime murder. Henceforth, on the other hand, anything like a complete "Catalogue of the Ships" would be a mere weariness of the spirit, even were it possible. We must be content to register some of the more salient incidents of the campaign of massacre.

As to the principles inspiring it there is no longer any doubt. Six months after the outbreak of the war Germany has finally realised that her scheme of world-conquest has miscarried, and that she is standing on the defensive. The mass of her people, and her soldiers and sailors not the least, have from the outset taken quite seriously the ten-thousand-times repeated phrase "Dieser uns aufgezwungene Krieg" ("This war which has been forced upon

us"). On the part of her rulers it had at firs been a conscious and purposeful lie—a deliberat move in the war gambit invented by Bismarck who openly confessed that the people would no throw themselves with sufficient ardour into a war in which they knew themselves to be the ag gressors. But even the rulers have by this tim repeated the formula so often that they hav perhaps come to believe in it; and rulers an people are at one in holding that, when Germany is on the defensive, she is absolved from all th traditional decencies of civilised warfare, and no only entitled, but in duty bound, to ignore every obligation of humanity that conflicts in th slightest degree with her immediate interest an convenience. Only thus can we account for th fact that such events as the sinking of the *Falaba* to say nothing of the greater crimes to follow seem to have elicited scarcely a word of protes in Germany. Much light is thrown upon th German frame of mind by a little inciden which occurred just at the time we have no reached.

On April 1, 1915, three trawlers, the *Jason Gloxinia,* and *Nellie,* were sunk by the U 10 The crew of the *Jason* were taken on board th submarine and were well treated. The com mander expressed regret, but said, "We hav orders to sink everything. It is war, *and yo started it.*" That is the whole German case

It is built upon the distinction which undoubtedly exists between the rights of the aggressor and the rights of his victim. If a highway robber were to attack me on a lonely road, I should not consider myself bound, in repelling him, to adhere to the delicacies of the duello, or even to the principles of fair-play. The Germans were right in insisting upon this ethical distinction—the weak point of their case lay in the fact that they, and not the Allies, were the highway robbers. It may also be mentioned that even the victim of an assault is scarcely justified in massacring the wife and children of his assailant.

The most notable feature of April, 1915, was the harrying of the British fishing fleet. On April 19 the Admiralty announced:

> To-day a German submarine sank by a torpedo the trawler *Vanilla*.
>
> The trawler *Fermo* endeavoured to rescue the crew, but she was fired at and driven off. All hands on the *Vanilla* were lost.
>
> This killing of fisher-folk for no military purpose should not escape attention. It is the second murder of this character committed within a week.

The *Fermo* was chased for four hours and barely escaped. Three days later the trawler *St. Lawrence* was shelled and sunk. Most of

the crew escaped, but the submarine prevented the rescue of two men who had been left on board.

Meanwhile, neutrals were learning the baselessness of the pretence in the German manifesto that what they had to fear in the war zone were only inevitable errors and accidents. Neutral ships were being destroyed with the greatest deliberation. On March 31 the Norwegian barque *Nor* was burnt because her cargo of timber rendered her practically unsinkable. On April 22, two Norwegian sailing ships, the *Oscar* and the *Eva*, were deliberately sunk by gunfire; and the Norwegians suffered other losses. In the first half of April two Dutch steamers, the *Katwyk* and the *Schieland*, were torpedoed and sunk. On May 1 the American tank steamer *Gulflight*, from Port Arthur (Texas) to Rouen, was torpedoed without warning off the Scilly Islands. The captain died of heart failure, and the wireless operator and a Spanish seaman were drowned. This event caused great excitement in the United States; yet the feeling it aroused was but a ripple compared with the tidal wave of horror and indignation which swept over not only America, but all countries in which war madness had not stifled human feeling, at the news which just a week later was flashed round the world.

In the last week of April many of the leading

papers of the United States contained the following advertisement:

> Travellers intending to embark for an Atlantic voyage are reminded that a state of war exists between Germany and her Allies and Great Britain and her Allies; that the zone of war includes the waters adjacent to the British Isles; that in accordance with the formal notice given by the Imperial German Government vessels flying the flag of Great Britain or any of her Allies are liable to destruction in those waters; and that travellers sailing in the war zone in ships of Great Britain or her Allies do so at their own risk.
>
> *Imperial German Embassy, Washington.*
> April 22.

It was an unheard-of proceeding for the Embassy of a belligerent Power thus to address a neutral nation through the public Press; but the world was growing accustomed to unheard-of proceedings on Germany's part, and nobody paid any attention to this one. Meanwhile, well-known people who had booked passages on the *Lusitania,* due to sail from New York on May 1, were receiving anonymous or pseudonymous telegrams warning them that the ship was doomed. It does not appear, however, that a single passage was cancelled. The German threats were considered to be mere bluff, no one believing possible such an outrage upon the law of nations

and the most elementary principles of humanity as an attack upon an unarmed liner, carrying many hundreds of non-combatants and many scores of neutrals.

The actual numbers were—

Saloon passengers . . .	292
Second-class passengers .	602
Third-class passengers . .	361
Crew	651
Total	1,906

All went well until, on the morning of Friday, May 7, the Irish coast was sighted. The day was very fine, the sea smooth. In order "to reach the bar at Liverpool at a time when he could proceed up the river without stopping to pick up a pilot," Captain Turner reduced the speed to 18 knots. Fastnet was passed about eleven o'clock. At two, the ship was fifteen miles south of the Old Head of Kinsale. At 2.15, without a moment's warning, and, indeed, before any one knew that there was a submarine in the neighbourhood, she was struck in the region of the engine-room, either by a single torpedo or by two in close succession. The breaking of the main steam-pipe paralysed the engines, so that it was impossible to stop her; and this, along with the strong list to starboard which the ship immediately took, made it very

difficult to get the boats safely launched. She had still perceptible way on her when she sank at 2.36, the time when Captain Turner's watch stopped. Ten or twelve boats and rafts in all got clear of the ship, and some survivors (the captain among them) were picked up in the water by the rescue ships which reached the scene two or three hours later. The total number saved is believed to have been 772, so that the death-roll may be set down at 1,134. Out of 218 American passengers, 79 survived.

It would be useless to attempt any description of the final scene. Since the sinking of the *Titanic*, just three years earlier, such tragedies have been only too familiar to the imagination. But the horror was heightened in the case of the *Lusitania* by the fact that she did not, like the *Titanic*, fall a victim to an incalculable caprice of destiny, but to the deliberate wickedness of human beings, dehumanised by a diabolical code of military ethics. "There was no screaming at the last," says one account, "only a long, wailing, mournful, despairing, beseeching cry." When Germany is, in the fullness of time, restored to sanity, that wail will surely haunt her dreams for many a day.

At the moment, the news was received with exultation in the Fatherland. A medal was struck to celebrate the event, and subscriptions were got up to testify the national gratitude to

the heroic crew of the U-boat. The *Kölnische Zeitung* said:

> The news will be received by the German people with unanimous satisfaction, since it proves to England and the whole world that Germany is quite in earnest in regard to her submarine warfare.

The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* said:

> With joyful pride we contemplate this latest deed of our Navy, and it will not be the last.

Austria, represented by the *Neue Freie Presse*, joined in the chorus of jubilation. But perhaps the most remarkable utterance called forth by the event was that of a clergyman, Pastor D. Baumgarten, who said, in the course of an address on the Sermon on the Mount:

> Whoever cannot prevail upon himself to approve from the bottom of his heart the sinking of the *Lusitania*—whoever cannot conquer his sense of the gigantic cruelty (ungeheure Grausamkeit) to unnumbered perfectly innocent victims . . . and give himself up to honest delight at this victorious exploit of German defensive power—him we judge to be no true German.

It would seem that the people rose nobly to this test, and that there were few indeed who did

not approve themselves true Germans by Pastor Baumgarten's standard.

Looking back from the vantage ground of two-and-a-half years, we may say that our sense of the hideousness of the crime is almost overshadowed by our perception of its colossal stupidity. It is certain that every man, woman, and child done to death that day has risen again in the shape of a thousand fighting-men—perhaps two or three thousand—supplied in profusion with all the appurtenances of war, and bent on the elimination from human affairs of the spirit which sank the *Lusitania*. "She was carrying," say the Germans, "5,400 cases of ammunition." If that was so, the German Navy had every right, on proving their case by visit and search, to claim her condemnation in a Prize Court. It may even be conceded at a pinch that, as her captors could scarcely take her to Bremen or Wilhelmshaven, they might have been justified in sinking her, after providing for the safety of passengers. "But," it may be replied, "she was one of the fastest ships afloat. If she had chosen to show her heels, the U-boat could never have overhauled her." That means, of course, that the U-boat, like every other weapon of war, has its limitations. It cannot do everything that Germany would desire; but that is a poor reason for supplementing its legitimate powers by a resort to cold-blooded mur-

der. If the U-boat had acted legally, and the ship had put herself technically in the wrong, there might have been nice questions of casuistry as to the course which the captors, or would-be captors, were entitled to pursue. As it was, no question of casuistry arose. The verdict of international law goes as clearly against the aggressors as the verdict of humanity, and Germany will long have cause to rue the hour when the engine was launched that sank "the stately ship so beautiful," and strewed the summer sea with the corpses of innocent women and children.

The legal aspect of the case was cogently summed up in the following passages from the Note addressed by President Wilson to the German Government:

> The Government of the United States has been apprised that the German Imperial Government considered themselves to be obliged by the extraordinary circumstances of the present war, and the measures adopted by their adversaries in seeking to cut Germany off from all commerce, to adopt measures of retaliation which go much beyond the ordinary methods of warfare at sea, in the proclamation of a war zone from which they warned neutral ships to keep away. This Government has already taken occasion to inform the Imperial German Government that it cannot admit the adoption of such measures or such a warning of danger to operate as in any degree in abbreviation of

the rights of American shipmasters or American citizens bound on lawful errands as passengers in merchant ships of belligerent nationality, and that it must hold the Imperial German Government to strict accountability for any infringement of those rights, whether intentional or incidental.

It does not understand the Imperial German Government to question those rights, but assumes on the contrary that the Imperial Government accept as a matter of course the rule that the lives of non-combatants, whether they be of neutral citizenship or citizens of one of the nations at war, cannot lawfully or rightly be put in jeopardy by the capture or destruction of unarmed merchantmen, and recognise also, as all other nations do, the obligation to take the usual precaution of visit and search to ascertain whether a suspected merchantman is in fact of belligerent nationality or is in fact carrying contraband under a neutral flag.

Many people felt at the time, in America no less than in the Allied countries, that the occasion was not one that could be met by the issue of diplomatic notes, however stern; but events have conclusively shown that it was wisdom and not pusillanimity that dictated President Wilson's policy of patience, even to the eleventh hour.

VI

THE "ARMENIAN" TO THE "PERSIA"

DAY by day the sinkings went on. From a statement issued by the Admiralty on June 21, 1915, it appeared that from the beginning of the "blockade" up to that date, 75 ships had been destroyed by submarines and 72 fishing vessels. On July 29, Mr. Bonar Law stated in Parliament that, up to July 27, approximately 1,550 persons had been killed as a result of U-boat attacks upon British merchant ships, and 22 as a result of attacks upon neutrals. As the *Lusitania* massacre accounted for 1,134 lives out of the 1,550, it would appear that the victims in minor incidents numbered 416. Be it remembered that, had respect been paid either to the law of nations or to ordinary humanity, almost all of these lives would have been saved.

On the evening of June 28, between 6 and 7 o'clock, the Leyland liner *Armenian*, from Newport News to Avonmouth, was off Trevose Head, when a submarine was sighted at a dis-

ance of about four miles. It fired two shots across the liner's bows, as a signal to stop. The rest may be told in the words of Captain Trickery:

Did I stop! No fear! I put my stern to him and ran for it. The boats had been slung out, and I ordered the crew to get into them, or stand by in case of emergency. We were shelled continuously, and the shrapnel killed several of the crew, and cut away the falls of some of the lifeboats, throwing the men into the sea. It was a desperate chase, and I had to realise that the enemy was gaining on me. But we did not intend to give in without a struggle. First my steering-gear was knocked out of order by a shell, then another fell in the engine-room, and a third carried the Marconi house away. Another shell disabled the men in the stoke-hold, preventing me from getting steam.

The ship was then on fire in three places, and I decided to surrender. We had resisted the enemy for an hour, and 12 or 13 men were lying dead on the deck. Some of the lifeboats were smashed, but there were quite enough left for the crew, which had been reduced through shell-fire by 29. It was 7.40 P.M. when we surrendered, and at 7 minutes past 8 the *Armenian* went down, two torpedoes being fired before she sank. The submarine commander showed us every civility, after we had given in, and he picked up some of our crew who, owing to the damage to

lifeboats, had fallen into the water. Most of the crew who perished were Americans.

The vessel was carrying 1,414 mules, and about 20 of the men who lost their lives were American muleteers, some of them negroes. In this case the submarine was acting within the letter of the law, since the *Armenian* had not obeyed the signal to stop; but as it had been proved in many cases that surrender was no guarantee against outrage, the plain fact was that Germany had annulled the law, and could not in equity plead its non-observance as an excuse for slaughter.

Barely a week later another merchant steamer set a U-boat at defiance, and succeeded in escaping, though not without tragic losses, more than half its crew being killed or wounded. The *Anglo-Californian*, of London, was off the Irish coast on the morning of July 4 when she sighted a submarine which at once began firing at the wireless apparatus. What followed is thus narrated by one of the survivors:

> The submarine kept circling about the ship, endeavouring to get into position to discharge a torpedo, but was baffled by the skill of the captain, who remained on the bridge, smiling at the enemy as they shelled the vessel. . . . They were so close to the *Anglo-Californian* that they used their rifles, and at last serious injury was inflicted on the ship.

For four hours the shelling continued. Several of the crew were killed, and many more seriously injured The captain was b own off the bridge with terrible wounds on his head, and an arm and a leg completely severed. Before his death he had given orders for the boats to be launched. This the crew tried to do, but they had great difficulty, as the ropes got entangled While hey were at work several more were killed. Ultimately four boats were launched, into which several men got and rowed about until picked up by vessels which came to their assistance. At 11.30 the *Anglo-Californian* succeeded in shaking off the submarine, and was able to steam into Queenstown.

Captain Parslow's son, who was second mate of the vessel, followed his father's courageous example. He was by his father's side when he was killed. Young Parslow was knocked down by the violence of the shock, but quickly got on his feet again and seized the wheel. He had scarcely done so when another shell burst alongside him and shattered one of the spokes of the wheel, but he remained at his post until assistance arrived. His gallant conduct undoubtedly saved the ship from destruction.

This is a tale of heroism which ought not to be forgotten, but in this case, as in that of the *Armenian*, the assailants were technically within their rights.

Neither in the spirit nor in the letter of the

law was there the shadow of an excuse for the next conspicuous achievement of the German undersea fleet. At half-past nine in the morning of Thursday, August 19, 1915, the White Star liner *Arabic*, one day out from Liverpool on its way to New York, was sixty miles off the Irish coast when she sighted the steamer *Dunsley* in difficulties and obviously sinking. She altered her course and steered towards the *Dunsley*, when suddenly a submarine emerged from behind it and, without a moment's warning, launched a torpedo at the liner, striking her about 90 feet from her bows. "Instantly," said a passenger, "the vessel trembled—there was such a roar as I never have heard and hope never to hear again; and a jet of water and debris rose up in the air fully 50 feet above the captain's bridge. . . . Almost instantaneously the boats were lowered from the davits. From first to last—it is my unchecked opinion only—the vessel was not above eight minutes between the moment she was struck and her final explosion and disappearance." Fortunately, unlike the *Lusitania*, she retained a more or less even keel, so that the boats were got into the water with comparative ease, and only 30 lives were lost out of a total of some 424. Twenty-six of the passengers were Americans, and of these two were drowned.

As she was outward bound she could not

possibly be carrying contraband of war, and the wantonness of the misdeed was peculiarly flagrant. The German Government tried to excuse it on the plea that the *Arabic* was attempting to ram the submarine, or, alternatively, to escape. To this the managers of the White Star Line replied:

> There is no doubt that the *Arabic* was struck by a torpedo. Captain Finch did not see the submarine, but undoubtedly saw the torpedo. There is no question of the *Arabic* having tried to ram the submarine, because it was not seen from the bridge. There is no question of the *Arabic* having tried to escape, except the very proper precaution of having put the helm hard over when they saw the torpedo.

Ultimately the Germans had to abandon their impossible position. Count Bernstorff stated to the American Government that his Government "were convinced that the submarine commander really thought he was going to be rammed; but that they did not feel that they could impugn the word of the British officers of the *Arabic* that such an intention never entered their heads, and hence could only regret and disavow the act, and promise to pay indemnity for American lives lost."

The next victim of note was the Allan liner *Hesperian*. Outward bound for Canada, she was

torpedoed without warning at 8.31 in the evening of September 4, about 84 miles south of the Fastnet. "The force of the impact was so great that the ship was literally stopped dead, the engine ceasing to move." Nevertheless, she remained afloat for thirty-five hours after being struck, but sank before she could be towed into port. She carried 314 passengers and a crew of about 250. Thirty lives were lost, mainly, no doubt, as a result of the explosion.

In the winter of 1915 the chief scene of action was transferred to the Mediterranean. The first notable victim was the Italian liner *Ancona*. As to the details of its destruction there is a good deal of uncertainty. Not even the date is quite beyond doubt. A survivor whose narrative appeared in *The Times* of November 12 states that the ship left Naples at 11.15 on the evening of Saturday the 6th, called at Messina on Sunday the 7th, and was attacked by the submarine "exactly at 1 o'clock on Monday afternoon." It would appear from this fairly circumstantial statement that the date was November 8; but the date usually given, and accepted by the Italian Government in a statement issued about a week after the event, is November 7. The attack took place off Cape Carbonara, in Sardinia, and the submarine, which was a large and powerful one, flew the Austrian flag. The suspicion originally enter-

ained that it was in reality German appears to ave been unfounded; but Austria was certain-y, in this case, acting upon the principles of her lly. It seems pretty clear that the *Ancona* at irst attempted to escape, and that the first hots fired at her were therefore justified; but t is also clear that she was bombarded after he had surrendered, and that the Austrians did heir best, by their shell-fire, to heighten the anic which broke out on board, thus contribut-ng both directly and indirectly to the loss of 208 lives out of a total of 507. The irreducible minimum of the indictment against the assail-ant is stated in the second American Note (De-cember 22) after the case had been fully investi-gated and the report of the Austro-Hungarian Admiralty considered. In that report, said the American Government, "it is admitted that the vessel was torpedoed after the engines had stopped and while the passengers were still on board. This admission alone, in the view of the Government of the United States, is suffi-cient to fix upon the commander of the sub-marine which fired the torpedo the responsibility of having wilfully violated the recognised law of nations, and entirely disregarded those hu-mane principles which every belligerent should observe in the conduct of war at sea."

It was again an Austrian submarine which on Christmas Eve, off the coast of Crete, tor-

pedoed without warning the French steamer *Ville de Ciotat,* causing a loss of 80 lives out of a total of about 300. From the survivors who landed at Malta the correspondent of *The Times* gathered the following details of the occurrence:

> The torpedo struck the stern of the ship. There was no sign of panic on board. The crew set to work to lower the boats, while the passengers with great coolness were gathering on deck from every part of the ship. Five lifeboats and two rafts were released, but one boat, containing women and children, capsized, and the occupants were thrown into the water, and all drowned. Another boat was smashed against the ship's side. When the *Ville de Ciotat* sank she carried with her the majority of those reported lost.
>
> The submarine remained off the scene until the vessel disappeared, and then circled round the lifeboats, jeering at the survivors and telling them, "There's a British steamer behind—she will pick you up." Five hours afterwards the British steamer *Meroe* picked up the survivors and brought them to Malta.

This "jeering," however, may be forgiven in view of the fact that the submarine made no attempt to sink the *Meroe,* as a German U-boat would almost certainly have done. On the other hand, nothing can palliate the attack with-

ut warning on a passenger-ship on which the ssailants must have known that there were in ll probability (as there were in fact) numerous vomen and children.

In the same waters, a week later, a still more hocking crime was perpetrated. The P. and O. Liner *Persia*, bound from London to Bombay, vas torpedoed without warning at 1.5 P.M. on December 30, and sank at 1.10, carrying with ner 335 souls out of a total of 501. The passengers numbered 184, of whom 119 were drowned—among them the American Consul at Aden.

Colonel the Hon. C. Bigham telegraphed from Alexandria to the P. and O. Company:

> Within five minutes of being torpedoed the ship had sunk, and it was impossible to lower the starboard boats, owing to the heavy list. Five or six boats, however, were able to be lowered to port. I did not see this myself, as I was washed overboard when the boat capsized.
>
> The conduct of the passengers and crew was splendid. There was no struggling, nor was there any panic. Four of the boats, after having been thirty hours at sea, were picked up by one of His Majesty's ships.

Hard as was the experience of those who found places in the boats, it was less terrible than that of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, who

thus described the "miracle" by which he was saved:

> . . . The port side was submerged in two minutes, and the ship sank by the stern, dragging me down with her.
>
> When I was blown up to the surface again I saw a dreadful scene of struggling human beings. There was hardly any wreckage to grasp. . . . After a desperate struggle I climbed on to the bottom of a broken boat, with 28 Lascars and 3 other Europeans. Our number was reduced to 19 by Thursday night, and only 11 remained on Friday, the rest having died from exposure and injuries.
>
> We saw a neutral steamer pass close by on Thursday evening at about 8 o'clock, but she took no notice of the red glare shown by another of the *Persia's* boats. I pulled five dead men out of the water during the first night in the water-logged boat. We saw a large steamer three miles away on the next day, but she, too, ignored our signals, probably thinking they were a ruse of an enemy submarine.
>
> Our broken boat capsized constantly, and we were all the time washed by the waves, so that we were almost exhausted when the second night began. At 8.30 P.M. we saw the Alfred Holt steamer *Ningchow* near us, and shouted as loudly as we could. Eventually the steamer stopped some way off, again suspecting a submarine trap, but at last she approached and rescued us on Friday night at 9 o'clock, after we had been thirty-two

hours in the sea without water or food, except one biscuit [each] from a tin found in the boat, since breakfast-time on Thursday.

In a fuller narrative which appeared after his return to England, Lord Montagu said:

> At sunset on Friday we had practically given up all hope of being saved. I said to my Scottish friend that it was the last sunset we should ever see, and he answered, "Yes, I'm afraid our number's up." . . . We capsized once more about 7 P.M., through the Italian turning light-headed. He had yielded to the temptation to drink salt water. In this accident we lost the tin of biscuits and the red flares we had hoped to use during the night.

The courage that sustains men through such an ordeal as this is still more wonderful than the physical endurance.

Both Germany and Austria disclaimed responsibility for the sinking of the *Persia*, leaving it on the shoulders of Turkey. But the spirit which inspired the deed was engendered in Berlin and nowhere else.

VII

AMERICA AND THE "SUSSEX"

EVER since the *Lusitania* catastrophe, an exchange of notes had been proceeding between the American and the German Governments with reference to that event, and to the rights and wrongs of submarine warfare in general. Each successive crime—and particularly the attacks upon the *Arabic*, the *Ancona*, and the *Persia*—created a fresh outburst of excitement in America, and renewed the strain upon the chronically tense relations. There was however, no real danger of its reaching the breaking point, since President Wilson, now approaching the end of his first term of office knew that his country was as yet neither morally nor materially prepared for war. On October 5, 1915, Count Bernstorff had assured Mr Lansing, the American Secretary of State, that stringent orders had been given to German submarines not to attack passenger-ships, "so that a recurrence of incidents similar to the *Arabic* case is considered out of the question." As a

matter of fact (as we have seen) the murder of passengers had, during the winter months, been left to Germany's Allies, who had, however, operated "as ever in their great Taskmaster's eye." At last, on February 9, 1916, the *Lusitania* incident was held to have been closed by a note from Berlin admitting that Germany had not been as careful of the safety of neutrals as she ought to have been. She still maintained that the sinking of the *Lusitania* was a justifiable retaliation for the British Order in Council; but the final effect of her note was this:

> Germany admits, not that retaliation is illegal, but that it is wrong where it may affect the safety of neutrals.
>
> This admission is strengthened by an offer to pay a full indemnity for the American victims, whose loss is deeply regretted.
>
> Germany repeats the pledge that unarmed merchantmen shall not be sunk without warning and unless the safety of the passengers and crew can be assured, provided, of course, that the vessels do not try to escape or resist.

The final proviso evidently left the door open for any desirable amount of barbarity; while of the German conception of what is meant by "assuring the safety of passengers and crew" we have already had specimens enough, and shall presently come upon many more.

Six weeks had barely passed when Germany

gave to the United States and the world at large a startling demonstration of the worth of her promises. At 2 o'clock in the afternoon of March 24, 1916, the French passenger steamer *Sussex* left Folkstone for Dieppe, carrying over 380 passengers, of whom about 270 are stated to have been women and children. As she approached the French coast, about 4.20, she was struck by a torpedo from an unseen submarine, which blew the whole fore part of the ship away, causing many deaths. Fortunately, the saloon bulkhead, though bent inward, stood firm, so that the ship remained afloat. As this, however, was not to be reckoned on, many of the passengers took to boats and rafts, and in so doing several lost their lives. The total death-roll amounted to about 80; and many of the survivors were severely injured, whether by the explosion or otherwise. There were 25 Americans among the passengers, most of whom, however, were saved. One of these, Mr. Edward Marshall, of the New York *Sun*, gave a vivid description of the catastrophe, which concluded thus:

> It would be difficult to exaggerate the indignation which was expressed on board among the American survivors. The fact that the ship was absolutely unarmed, . . . that she carried no munitions, and that no portion of her cargo was designed to give

comfort to the fighting forces of the Allies, combined with the fact that she was known to be a boat upon which women and children, under the necessity of making the Channel passage, inevitably would sail, made the act of those who struck at her seem particularly inexcusable. To an American who looked about upon the company of white-faced, shivering women during these long hours of gloom and peril before the rescue-ships appeared, and who listened to the wailing of the babies vainly wrapped against the chilling cold, sometimes by strangers' hands, because their mothers' hands were still forever, a growing feeling of hot anger was inevitable.

This feeling was widely shared in America, and relations between Germany and the United States slipped back to the condition of tension in which they had stood before the so-called *Lusitania* settlement.

The German Government at first tried to evade responsibility. The *Sussex*, it suggested, was not sunk by a torpedo, but struck a mine. When fragments of a German torpedo were produced from the wreck (which had been towed into Boulogne), Berlin admitted that a U-boat had torpedoed a ship on the day in question near the spot where the *Sussex* was attacked, but produced a drawing, made by the submarine commander, of the boat he had waylaid, which did not correspond with the appearance

of the *Sussex*, and was held to justify the commander's conviction that the ship he attacked was a mine-layer of the *Arabis* class. The conclusion indicated was again that the *Sussex* struck a mine, though no explanation was vouchsafed of the fragments of a torpedo among the wreckage. President Wilson, in a note published on April 26, waved aside these subterfuges with polite contempt. He said:

> . . . The *Sussex* was never armed; she was a ship which, as is well known, was regularly employed only for the transport of passengers across the English Channel. She did not follow the route pursued by troop transports or munition ships. About 80 passengers, noncombatants of every age of both sexes, including citizens of the United States, were killed or wounded.
>
> A careful, thorough, scientific, impartial examination by officers of the United States Navy and Army has conclusively established the fact that the *Sussex* was torpedoed without warning or challenge to surrender, and that the torpedo with which she was struck was of German make. In the view of the United States Government, these facts, from beginning to end, make the conclusion that the torpedo was discharged from a German submarine inevitable. . . . After careful examination of the note of the Imperial Government of April 10, the United States Government regrets to have to say that it has derived the impression . . . that the Imperial Govern-

ment has failed to appreciate the seriousness of the situation which has arisen, not only out of the attack on the *Sussex*, but out of the whole method and character of submarine warfare as they appear in consequence of the unrestricted maintenance of the practice of indiscriminate destruction of merchantmen of every kind, nationality, and designation, during a period exceeding twelve months, by commanders of German submarines. . . .

In pursuit of this policy of submarine warfare against its enemy's trade . . . the Imperial Government's submarine commanders have practised a procedure of such reckless destruction as made it more and more clear during recent months that the Imperial Government has found no way to impose on them such restrictions as it had hoped and promised. The Imperial Government has repeatedly and solemnly assured the United States Government that passenger ships, at least, would not be thus treated, and yet it has repeatedly allowed its submarine commanders to disregard these assurances with impunity. . . .

A more delicate way could scarcely have been found of informing the German Government that it had systematically lied and broken its word. The note proceeded:

The United States Government has adopted a very patient attitude, and at every stage of this painful experience of tragedy upon tragedy has striven to be guided by well-

considered regard for the extraordinary cir cumstances of an unexampled war. . . . I has accepted the successive explanations an assurances of the Imperial Government a naturally made in full sincerity and good faith and has desired not to abandon the hope tha it would be possible for the Imperial Govern ment to regulate and supervise the action of the commanders of its naval forces in way which will bring their conduct into con sonance with the recognised principles o humanity embodied in international law. . .

To its pain it has become clear to it tha the standpoint which it adopted from the be ginning is inevitably right—namely, that th employment of submarines for the destruction of enemy trade is of necessity . . . com pletely irreconcilable with the principles o humanity, with the long-existing, undisputed rights of neutrals, and with the sacred privi leges of non-combatants. . . .

If the Imperial Government should no now proclaim and make effective renunciation of its present methods of submarine warfar against passenger and cargo ships, the United States Government can have no other choice than to break off completely diplomatic rela tions with the German Government.

Germany's reply to this peremptory demand that she should mend her ways was a conditiona promise to do so. Its operative clause ran thus

The German naval forces have received th following orders: In accordance with the gen

eral principles of visit and search and destruction of merchant vessels recognised by international law, such vessels, both within and without the area declared as naval war zone, shall not be sunk without warning and without saving human lives, unless these vessels attempt to escape or offer resistance.

This was merely a somewhat more explicit repetition of a pledge already given, and it was accompanied by an expression of "confidence" that the United States Government would now "co-operate" with the German Government "towards the restoration of the freedom of the seas" and would "insist that the British Government shall forthwith observe the rules of international law universally recognised before the war." "Should the steps taken by the Government of the United States," the note continued, "not attain the object it desires, to have the laws of humanity followed by all belligerent nations, the German Government will then be facing a new situation, in which it must reserve itself complete liberty of decision." This was as much as to say, "We shall not consider ourselves bound by this promise one moment longer than we find it convenient so to do"; but it suited President Wilson's policy to treat cynically unreal "concessions" as though they were real, while at the same time he emphatically declined to allow any weight

to the condition attached to the German pron ise. The American Government, he said, "coul not for a moment entertain, much less discus a suggestion that respect by German naval a thorities for the rights of citizens of the Unite States upon the high sea should in any way in the slightest degree be made contingent upo the conduct of any other Government affectin the rights of neutrals and non-combatant Responsibility in such matters is single, n joint; absolute, not relative."

So the discussion ended for the moment a manifestly hollow truce, which maintained precarious existence of nine months—from Ma 1916, until February, 1917. Meanwhile, November, Dr. Woodrow Wilson had been r elected President of the United States.

VIII

MINOR BARBARITIES

THE world is always, and inevitably, impressed by the magnitude of a disaster as measured by the numbers involved. A cry of horror goes up when a great liner carries hundreds to their doom; but no one pays much attention when a tramp or a trawler is torpedoed, and its handful of a crew either drowned or subjected to such appalling hardships as make the fate of their dead messmates seem the more desirable. Yet the life of a foremast hand is as dear to him, and his capacity for suffering is as great, as that of the millionaire who occupies an "Ambassador's Suite" on a floating palace. Every man lives his own life and dies his own death; and his death is no more tragic if a thousand fellow-victims share his fate, than if he die alone or along with a mere boat's crew of comrades. German piracy shows quite as blackly in its individual murders as in its wholesale massacres.

In the case of all vessels attacked without

warning—such as the *Lusitania*, the *Arabic*, the *Sussex*, and many others—it is clear that the assailants set at absolute defiance the rule of international law that when a prize has to be destroyed due provision must first be made for the safety of the passengers and crew. In these cases it was apparently the express purpose of the submarine commander to kill as many non-combatants, as many women and children, as he possibly could. The German Government admitted, by implication at any rate, the illegality of these proceedings, and promised the American Government over and over again that merchant ships should not be destroyed without any consideration for the lives of passengers and crew. But then came the question of interpreting the phrase "due provision" for the safety of non-combatants. In other wars it had always been understood as meaning that they should be subjected to no more than the ordinary risks of maritime travel. Previous practice has thus been summarised by Sir Frederick Smith in his book on "The Destruction of Merchant Ships" (p. 49):

> During the American Revolution, Paul Jones removed the persons on board before destroying a captured vessel; and when he could [not?] do so he released his prize. Similarly in the war of 1812 this rule was observed. In the case of the *Felicity*—to give but one

example—"the officers and crew, together with their clothes and other property, had been removed on board the *Endymion*," and the *Felicity* was destroyed. In the American Civil War, Captain Semmes, the notorious commander of the *Alabama*, did not hesitate to destroy his prizes, but invariably removed first the persons on board. When it was found impossible to do so, he released the ship. Thus he released the *Ariel*, a valuable prize, "and sent her and her large number of passengers on their way rejoicing," because he could not find any accommodation for them. Before the destruction of the *Hatteras*, which was, moreover, a warship, "every living being in it was safely conveyed to the *Alabama*." "We were making war," he observed, "upon the enemy's commerce, not upon his unarmed seamen. It gave me as much pleasure to treat these with humanity as it did to destroy his ships." . . . Again, in the Russo-Japanese war, the crews of captured vessels were removed before destruction was effected. In the present war British commanders scrupulously observed the rule; and on several occasions German cruisers, *e. g.*, the *Emden*, the *Karlsruhe*, the *Eitel Friedrich*, did the same.

There could be no doubt, therefore, that, in the light of all previous practice, "safety" must be taken to mean safety, and not imminent and direful danger. It was only when the U-boat came on the scene that it occurred to any human being to suppose that the requirement as

to "due provision for the safety of passenger and crew" was fulfilled when they had been se adrift in open boats, at any season, in an weather, and at such distances from land as t render their ultimate rescue extremely problem atical, and to ensure them, in the best event hours and days of the acutest suffering. As matter of fact, German "humanity," as thu exercised, has often inflicted on its victims suc tortures that it would have been humaner t have drowned them at once.

As the Germans began to build more power ful U-boats their sphere of action was naturall enlarged, and we find them pursuing thei amiable calling at great distances from land The following is a table of the distances fron the nearest land at which certain ships hav been sunk, and their passengers and crews com mitted to open boats:

SHIP	MILES FROM LAND
Alnwick Castle	320
Caithness (38 lives lost)	240
Karila	230
Rona	212
Franconia (12 lives lost)	195
Silverash	180
Galgate	170
Jolo	155
Bernadette (26 lives lost)	150
Cymric (4 lives lost)	140
Rowanmore	128
City of Birmingham	126
Industry	120
Italiana	112
Lady Ninian (1 life lost)	106

Numberless are the tales of appalling hardships, often ending in death, which have resulted from the dastardly practice of leaving sailors and passengers at the mercy of wind and weather in open boats—thus

> Keeping the word of promise to the ear,
> To break it to the hope.

Here are a few examples:

The *Umeta* was sunk without warning, and one of her crowded open boats was left adrift from December 1st to December 5th. One man died from thirst and exposure.

The crew of the *Cottingham* were forced to take to their boats on December 26. There were six men in the captain's boat, which was picked up in a few hours. Of the chief officer's boat nothing was heard until it drifted ashore bottom upward on the Welsh coast. Of the seven men it had contained there was no trace.

The *Clan Macfarlane* was torpedoed without warning on December 30, 1915, in the Mediterranean. The crew of 76 got clear in six boats. They tried to make the coast of Crete, but were prevented by stormy weather. For nine days they were tossed about at the mercy of wind and wave. In every boat men died, one by one, of exposure—the Lascar seamen first, then the Europeans. Two of the boats were abandoned, and the survivors of their crews

taken on board the other boats; but at last the remaining four were separated, and it was only a single boat, with its emaciated, exhausted crew, that was picked up on January 7 by the steamship *Crown of Arragon*. The other boats, with their occupants, were never heard of again.

The *Windermere* was shelled by an Austrian submarine in the Mediterranean, at a point about 40 miles from Port Mahon. The crew abandoned her in two boats, containing 12 men each. The chief officer's boat reached Las Sabinas in Majorca the next day. The master's boat was never heard of again.

The *Scottish Monarch* was sunk by shell fire about 40 miles south from Ballycotton Light. The master and 19 of the crew left the ship in one boat, the chief officer and 14 hands in the other. The remainder of the story is thus related by Mr. Alfred Noyes in "Open Boats":

> The two boats kept together till dark; but at 8.40 the chief officer's boat capsized, owing to the choppy sea, and sight of the other boat was lost in the confusion.
>
> All hands, after a struggle, managed to regain the boat, but she remained full of water, with her tanks adrift. Before midnight she had again capsized three times; and the reader may imagine for himself what scenes were enacted in that lonely darkness of wind and sea. Only four hands out of the fifteen were left at the end of the third desperate

struggle. They were the mate, the carpenter, and two seamen. They saw one or two vessels in the early morning, but their only means of signalling was a handkerchief on a stick, and they were not noticed.

The boat was battered to and fro like a cockle-shell in the smoking seas; and about eight o'clock in the morning the two seamen became too exhausted to cling on. They were slowly washed overboard. Their faces and hands swirled up once or twice in the foam, and then disappeared.

At five o'clock on that day, after long hours of struggle, the mate, who was sitting aft, gradually dropped into the water in the bottom of the boat and died there. The carpenter was now the only survivor. All that he endured in the long following night and day, with the dead man washing to and fro at his feet, and the dead face looking up at him through the bubbling water, can only be imagined. He says that "nothing particular" happened. At nightfall on the next day, more than twenty-four hours later, twenty-four hours of lonely battering and slow starvation, he and the dead body were picked up by a Grimsby trawler and landed at St. Ives. Nothing was ever heard of the other boat.

The poet who imagined the torments of the Ancient Mariner imagined nothing more terrible than this product of the realistic German genius.

The crew of the *Coquette* were forced to abandon her, in two open boats, by a U-boat

which first looted and then sank her. The master's boat made land in North Africa, where three of the crew were killed, and ten taken prisoner and held to ransom by Bedouin Arabs. The chief officer's boat was never heard of again.

The *Tringa* was sunk by an Austrian submarine. One of the boats was picked up after drifting for forty-eight hours. The lifeboat, containing the captain and thirteen sailors, was never heard of again.

"Never heard of again"—that is the monotonous refrain in scores of cases. In the case of the *Rappahannock*, which sailed from Halifax on October 17, 1916, the whole ship, with its crew of 37, was never heard of again, except in the German wireless which reported its destruction. Germany cannot complain if this gives rise to the darkest suspicions. It was one of her own chargés d'affaires, Count Luxburg, who recommended that the ships of the Argentine Republic, in which he was the accredited agent of a friendly (!) power, should be *spurlos versenkt*—sunk without leaving a trace; and there is little doubt that in some of the cases in which the boats of a sunken ship have been deliberately shelled, the object was to leave no one alive to betray the presence of a submarine in the region in question. Dead men tell no tales.

Thus, for instance, after the *Westminster* had been attacked without warning (December 14

916, in the Mediterranean, and sunk in four minutes, her boats were shelled from a distance of 3,000 yards, and one of them was sunk, the captain and chief engineer being killed outright and five other men drowned. The *North Wales*, like the *Rappahannock*, disappeared altogether, save for a line in the German wireless report. The *Kildale* was torpedoed in the Mediterranean, and as she sank the U-boat came to the surface and opened fire upon the boats with guns and rifles. She would doubtless have succeeded in exterminating the survivors had not two British patrol boats appeared on the scene and put her to flight.

The Times of August 20, 1917, published a list of twelve authenticated instances of submarines firing on survivors who had escaped in open boats. In eight of these cases the ship sunk was British, in two Swedish, in one Danish, and in one Dutch.

When the *Alnwick Castle* was torpedoed 320 miles from the nearest land, and the survivors had taken to the boats, the whole crew of the submarine came on deck and stood with folded arms, laughing at their plight. The acting fourth officer of the *Thracia*, torpedoed off the coast of France, April 27, 1917, thus relates his experiences:

> I was on a capsized boat with the stern blown off, about two and a half to three hours after the ship was sunk. The submarine

came near me—at the time (11 P.M.) it wa very dark—and asked what ship it was tha she had sunk, where was she from, where wa she for, what was her cargo, and was I a Englishman?

I answered all the questions.

He then said: "I am going to shoo you." I told him to shoot away.

He then said: "I don't waste powder o any pig of an Englishman," and left me i the boat. In the morning, at 10.30, I wa picked up by a French fishing-boat.

Another instance of German geniality fo lowed the sinking of the steamship *Jupite* (May 21, 1917), with the loss of 19 lives. T the six survivors, who got away in an open boa one of the crew of the submarine shouted "You've no home now, but there's room for yo below."

On January 27, 1917, at a time when Ge many still purported to be bound by her promis to the United States as to saving non-combatan lives, the British steamship *Artist* was sun 48 miles from land, in a bitter midwinter gal One of the boats was picked up three days late It had originally contained 23 men, but 7 ha died of wounds or exposure. The Admiralty in reporting the case, justly remarked that t pretend that anything had been done to ensur the safety of the crew would be sheer hypocrisy

On April 19, 1917, the British steamshi

Caithness was torpedoed without warning, 240 miles from land. The master and 20 men went down with the sinking ship. The rest of the crew, about 20, managed to right a capsized boat in which, a gradually dwindling company, they drifted for fourteen days, without any food, before a West Hartlepool steamer picked up the remnant. There were then three living men on board the boat and one corpse, which the living were too weak to throw overboard. One of the three survivors died on the day of rescue.

Though British seamen were, of course, the favourite and by far the most numerous victims of maritime "*Kultur*," neutrals were very far from being exempt from its operations. It cannot even be said that Germany made any clear discrimination between neutrals who were friendly to her and neutrals who were really neutral. The countrymen of the great Kaiser-worshipper, Sven Hedin, and of the obsequious diplomats who were transmitting cipher messages from German agents in Spanish America, came in for several shrewd knocks at the hands of their neighbours across the Baltic. We have just seen (p. 69) how, in two instances, Swedish crews were shelled in their boats by the submarines which had sunk their ships. As Norwegian vessels, however, were the most numerous and most daring in the northern waters,

they were the most frequent victims. At the end of 1916, even before the days of confessedly "unrestricted" frightfulness, official returns showed that 278 Norwegian ships had been sunk either by U-boats or mines, and 204 sailors had lost their lives. During the first six months of 1917, 308 ships and 421 lives had to be added to the account, making a grand total of 586 ships and 625 lives. The steadfastness and intrepidity of Norwegian seamen have all along been worthy of the highest admiration.

Some of the more conspicuous instances of Germany's treatment of Norwegian shipping are worth recording. On June 9, 1915, the *Svein Jarl* was torpedoed without warning. The whole front part of the ship was blown away, and she sank in thirty seconds, the propeller still whirling as she took the last plunge. Five men were picked up after passing many hours in the water. Twelve lives were lost.

On June 6, 1916, the *Prosper III.*, possibly mined, but much more probably torpedoed without warning, went to the bottom in fifteen seconds. One man saved his life by clinging for sixty hours to the keel of an overturned boat. He had three companions at first, but they dropped off one by one. In all 29 lives were lost.

The *Ravn* was sunk by gunfire in the Arctic Ocean on September 29, 1916. Though a gale was blowing, with frequent blasts of snow and

hail, and the sea ran very high, the U-boat rendered no assistance whatever. The captain's boat, with six men, was never heard of again. The mate's boat reached land with two dead men aboard her. Their bodies were taken ashore, but were washed away by the waves in the course of the night; and before morning came two other men had died of cold and exposure.

After the proclamation of "unrestricted" warfare in January, 1917, the favourite German method of treating Norwegian ships was to shell them without warning or parley, and without giving the crew a moment's grace to take to their boats. The lives of many sailors have been sacrificed to this wanton brutality. On June 13 the sailing ship *Carmel* was towed into Peterhead, very much damaged by gunfire. In the cabin was the body of a man whose head had been shot off. All the rest of the crew had disappeared, and have never been heard of. Some ten days later, on the night of June 24, as the steamship *Kong Haakon* was passing through the Bay of Biscay under convoy, a U-boat suddenly appeared alongside of her, and at a distance of about 35 yards poured into her a withering fire, which converted her into a shambles. Nineteen lives were lost and only 4 saved.

In several cases the Germans were guilty of an almost incredible extreme of brutality in

leaving women to share the perils and agonies of exposure in open boats in mid-ocean. The captain of the Norwegian steamship *Dalmata* had been recently married, and took his wife with him for her first sea-voyage. The ship was torpedoed on February 11, 1917, though the presence of a woman on board was well known to the U-boat commander. In the Christiania *Aftenpost* the lady gave this account of her experiences:

> Fortunately we had sails, a small cask of water, biscuits, and some other victuals, but no lights. We rowed for the whole of the day and sailed during the night, when it was pitch dark. We were in the middle of the Atlantic, and our signals of distress were not observed. . . . The sea was extremely heavy, it was piercingly cold, and my two coats and blanket were soaked as the result of the sea washing over the boat.
>
> On Tuesday (February 14) our food and water failed. One man in my boat died from the frost on Tuesday morning, and most of the others were ill. On Wednesday morning there was still no prospect of rescue, and we knew not where we were drifting. . . . I lay down in the bottom of our boat, prepared to die. . . . My arms and legs were like sticks, and my eyes bloodshot from staring. At nine next morning we came within view of the schooner *Ellen Benzon,* which rescued us. The rough sea prevented her coming alongside, and I was hoisted up by a rope.

They had been five days and some hours at the mercy of the wintry Atlantic.

A month later (March 13, 1917) it was the turn of the Swedish schooner *Dag*. She was sunk 200 miles west of the Scillys, and the captain, his wife, and eight men were adrift in an open boat for four days and three nights.

The Danish steamer *Hropatyr* was torpedoed on December 22, 1916, off Ushant. A heavy sea was running, and the boats had just been lowered with great difficulty, when the submarine came rushing up and struck the lifeboat, hurling it against the steamer's side. The captain was crushed to death, his head being severed from his body, and a sailor received injuries from which he afterwards died.

It might have been imagined that a civilised nation, even if it adopted the principle that "necessity knows no law" (*Not kennt kein Gebot*), and therefore assumed the right to destroy the whole world's shipping, would at least show some discrimination in favour of neutrals, and try to carry out the work of destruction as considerately as possible. There is, in fact, no trace of any such effort. It almost seems as if the *furor Teutonicus* wreaked itself upon neutrals with a peculiar gusto. That they were in no way distinguished from enemies is apparent from the fact that they were not only sunk at sight, but were frequently pillaged before being

disposed of. Thus the captain of the Danis steamer *Daisy* gave evidence before the Shippin Court at Copenhagen to the effect that, befor sinking his ship in the Atlantic, the German packed up provisions, instruments, and othe articles in eight large sacks and forced th Danish sailors to assist in removing them to th submarine. "The captain's map of the Bay o Biscay, which was essential for navigating th lifeboat, was seized, as well as nearly all th bread in the lifeboat's lockers." So, too, th captain and crew of the Norwegian sailing shi *Fremad*, who were picked up after spending fiv days and nights in an open boat, stated tha before sinking the ship the Germans annexed a the provisions on board, "broke open boxes an cupboards, and looted all valuables." Since th beginning of 1917, indeed, the looting of Nor wegian ships has been the rule rather than th exception. Even articles of personal property such as cigarette cases and the photographs i the captain's cabin, have been carried off. Th Germans have supplied themselves liberally wit blankets and whisky, while denying to the luck less men in the boats any such mitigation o their lot. It seems as though their chief objec in life has been to make themselves as widel and as deeply hated as possible.

The tale of minor misdeeds—that is to say outrages affecting only cargo boats as distinc

from passenger liners—could with ease be indefinitely extended. It is probable that these small-scale atrocities have, in the aggregate, caused more protracted and acuter suffering to a greater number of people than was caused by the wholesale massacres at which the world stood aghast. This may almost certainly be inferred, indeed, from the figures as to loss of life on British merchant vessels given in the House of Commons on June 30, 1917. It was stated that 9,748 non-combatants had been done to death, of whom 3,828 were passengers, while 5,920 were officers and seamen. In a very few instances the Germans had no doubt the letter of the law on their side, since the vessels were attempting to escape; but the proportion of lives lost under these conditions was certainly infinitesimal; and the attempt to escape was morally if not legally justified by the fact that there was no guarantee, and indeed no probability, that the crew (or passengers) of ships which surrendered would meet with the humane treatment prescribed by international law.

IX

MURDER BY SUBMERSION

THE Nietzschean *Uebermensch*—the Superman—as soon as he tried to put in practice his superiority to such human weaknesses as chivalry and compassion, was bound to develop into the *Untermensch*, or, as we may put it, the Subterman. Germany, with all her cult of Shakespeare, has forgotten the pregnant lines:

> I dare do all that may become a man;
> Who dares do more is none.

The man who seeks to rise above humanity inevitably sinks below it. There is something symbolical, then, in the fact that the worst atrocities (if, indeed, degrees of comparison are possible between deeds of unmitigated blackness) should be committed by men whose business it is to sink into the sunless, airless underworld, and there lie in ambush to murder and hide from vengeance. *Untermensch*, or Subterman, is thus a peculiarly apt designation for the U-boat pirate—the man who haunts the deeps,

far beneath the normal low-water mark of human nature.

As it seems to be the chief ambition of the typical Subterman to exhaust all possible methods of cruelty, it was natural that he should not overlook the fairly obvious device of gathering a number of helpless people on the deck of his submersible craft, and then diving from under them and leaving them to drown. In this pleasant sport he has indulged on various occasions.

The steamship *La Belle France*, bound from Karachi to Dieppe, had just passed through the Suez Canal and was proceeding up the Mediterranean, when, on February 1, 1916, she was torpedoed without warning. As she at once listed heavily to starboard, all hands were ordered to the port side boats, two of which were lowered. Mr. Alfred Noyes, in "Open Boats," thus describes what followed:

> The Lascar boat crews were ordered to keep close alongside the ship, but they became panic-stricken in face of the new frightfulness, and cast off from the ship without orders. The master and three other officers jumped into the drifting boats from the deck. The chief officer, who was standing by the falls, and the chief engineer, who was stopping the engines, were left on board as the boats drifted away.
>
> The chief officer dived overboard and was

picked up by No. 3 boat. The chief engineer being unable to swim, remained on board till as the vessel righted herself, he succeeded in getting into No. 2 starboard boat, which was partly lowered. After about half an hour he was picked up by No. 3 boat.

No. 4 boat, in the meantime, had capsized. Some of the crew were swimming, and others were clinging to her bottom. The submarine rose to the surface, came alongside, and picked up these men. No. 3 boat was then called alongside the submarine by the officer in command, and was ordered to stand by. The officer of the submarine took his revolver and threatened to shoot both crews if they came nearer.

At this moment four trawlers were seen on the horizon; and the submarine, sublimely oblivious of the shivering men it had just hauled on to its deck, dived with the whole bunch of them still standing there, and left them to flounder to the surface as best they could. Some of them were saved by No. 3 boat, but 19 were drowned, a good many being sucked down by the diving submarine. A delay of a very few seconds, of course would have made it possible to save them all.

Another case of the same manœuvre followed the torpedoing of the Norwegian steamer *Fjeldli* in May, 1917. On board one of the boats which left the steamer were the steward and his wife. This boat was ordered to come up to the submarine, as it was wanted to carry bombs for the destruction of another Norwegian steamer

he *Randane*, which had been held up at the ame time. The steward and his wife were told o go on board the submarine; but the com-anionway leading to its interior was too narrow o allow them to pass with their life-belts on, o they were made to take them off. The J-boat commander then questioned the steward s to the whereabouts of a certain ship that ad left Bergen on the same day as the *Fjeldli*, ut could get nothing out of them. He and his vife were therefore ordered back to the deck f the submarine, but their life-belts were not estored to them. The hatches were then closed lown, and the luckless pair were left alone on leck. Soon afterwards a destroyer hove in ight, and was evidently observed by means of he periscope, for the U-boat submerged with-ut any warning and left its involuntary guests struggling in the sea. Both were sucked down as the vessel dived, but when they came to the surface again they found themselves close to one of the boats of the *Fjeldli*, and were thus rescued. The Germans could not possibly have calculated on this happy ending to the episode. They had simply no thought to spare for such a trifling matter as the lives of a Norwegian man and woman who had had the audacity to put to sea in defiance of the prohibition issued by the German Empire.

It would be absurd to call the German

Subterman a coward. His service is an extremely dangerous one: he has death constantly at his elbow, and that in a peculiarly disagreeable form. Far better, surely, to die in open battle than to be drowned like a rat in a trap. But such cases as this of the *Fjeldli*, and that of *La Belle France*, place the submarine commanders concerned in an awkward dilemma: they show them to be either wantonly murderous or subject to such fits of panic as to render them oblivious of manifest duties which they could easily perform with no appreciable risk. The cool, collected courage which always keeps its head is evidently no part of their moral outfit.

In the more famous case of the *Belgian Prince* there is no room for the theory of murder in panic or murder by inadvertence. Here the verdict can only be deliberate and wilful murder—the order had apparently gone forth that the *Belgian Prince* was to be *spurlos versenkt*. She was torpedoed without warning about eight in the evening of July 31, 1917. The crew escaped in three boats—two life-boats and a small jolly boat. What then occurred may be narrated in the words of Mr. Thomas A. Bowman, chief engineer, whose story is confirmed in all essentials by the two other survivors:

> When the submarine came round to the starboard side he started to fire at the ship's side with a machine-gun. By this time every-

body was clear of the ship, and the boats were about 200 yards from the ship. The submarine came up to where the boats were and ordered the boats to come alongside.

The commander ordered the master to step on the submarine, after which he took him down in the submarine. Then all the crew and officers were ordered aboard, searched, and the life-belts taken off most of the crew and thrown overboard. I may add, during this time the Germans were very abusive towards the crew. After this the German sailors got into the two life-boats, threw the oars, bailers, and gratings overboard, took out the provisions and compasses, and then damaged the life-boats with an axe.

The small boat was left intact, and five German sailors got into her and went towards the ship. When they boarded her they signalled to the submarine with a flash lamp, and then the submarine cast the damaged life-boats adrift and steamed away from the ship for about two miles, after which he stopped.

About 9 P.M. the submarine dived and threw everybody in the water without any means of saving themselves, as the majority of them had had their life-belts taken off them. After this I was swimming about all night until daylight, when I saw that the ship was still afloat, so I was swimming towards her with the intention of boarding her when suddenly I saw her explode aft and sink stern first, which was about 5.30 A.M.

After swimming about for some time I saw

> smoke on the horizon, so I swam towards it. It proved to be an English patrol boat, which picked me up at about 6.30 on Wednesday morning. There were only three survivors out of a crew of 42 men all told. The master was taken away in the submarine. The total loss of life was 38.

The other survivors, G. Silessi and Willie Snell, an American, say not merely that the life-belts were taken off "most of the crew," but that all life-belts had to be given up. The crew, says Snell—

> were ordered to hold their hands up, then "Take your life-belts off"; they were asked if they had any arms, and told to lay their life-belts on the deck. One of the officers then threw seven or eight of the belts overboard

Snell had succeeded in secreting a life-belt under his raincoat. Silessi kept himself afloat all night without any life-belt. We may presume that Bowman contrived to secure a life-belt, though he does not say so.

The murderous intention is manifest. What other motive could there be for destroying the life-boat? Be it noted that the master (now, no doubt, a prisoner in Germany) had been taken below from the beginning, and would know nothing of what was proceeding on deck. If, on emerging from captivity, he had found

that all his crew had disappeared without a trace, he would have had no reason to doubt that they had got off in the life-boats, and had simply been lost at sea. It was only the accidental survival of the engineer and two seamen that brought the atrocity to light. But for that, the *Belgian Prince*, like the *Rappahannock* and the *North Wales*, would have been *spurlos versenkt*.

X

HOSPITAL SHIPS AND RELIEF SHIPS

THE frenzy of destructive malevolence which has possessed the German mind is in nothing more conspicuous than in the attacks upon hospital ships and upon Belgian relief ships. The former are, indeed, the more atrocious, but the latter are the more insane. To sink a hospital ship is to do appreciable damage to the enemy, though by infamous means; to destroy relief ships, which are employed not only in supplying the needs of the Belgian population, but in "relieving" Germany of one of her most manifest duties, has all the air of that proverbially idiotic proceeding, "cutting off one's nose to spite one's face."

We have seen that attacks on hospital ships began very early in the war. On February 1, 1915, at 5 P.M., a torpedo was discharged at the hospital ship *Asturias*, but fortunately missed her. Of the fact there is no possible doubt—indeed, it is admitted by the Germans. The captain's report ran as follows:

At 4.15 P.M. on February 1, with the P.M.O., I inspected ship, finishing at 5 P.M. Going toward the bridge from the main saloon, Mr. Fletcher, cadet, reported to me, torpedo just fired at us passing astern. I at once went on the bridge, and upon the Second Officer confirming the statement that he observed the wash of a submarine two points on the starboard beam, I at once starboarded 3½ points, sending down to the engine-room instructions to give the ship all steam possible. After that, until passing the lightship, I made a zigzag course. . . .

Apart from the testimony of my officers a number of people on board not only saw the course of the torpedo, but also observed the submarine following in our wake.

It was a very light and clear evening, and at 5.15 broad daylight, and in no possibility could the character of the ship be mistaken.

The German excuse, delivered through the Embassy at Washington, was that the *Asturias*, "looming up in the twilight," was in fact mistaken for a transport. We should perhaps give the commander the benefit of the doubt, and condemn his seamanship rather than his humanity; but even this, in the light of subsequent events, is a little difficult.

The first successful attack upon a hospital ship was perhaps not the work of a German U-boat; but even if the criminal was nominally Turkish, she may very likely have been manned

by Germans; and at all events the Turks would not have ventured on such an atrocity had they had any fear of incurring the censure of their German masters.

The Russian hospital ship *Portugal*—a converted French liner, still navigated by her French officers and crew—lay off the Turkish coast of the Black Sea on the morning of March 17, 1916. She was carrying no wounded, but the Red Cross staff was on board and the full crew. She had in tow a number of flat-bottomed boats, used in transporting the wounded from the shore to the ship; and, one of these having filled with water, she was stationary for the moment while the water was being pumped out. The ship was painted white with a red border all round. The funnels were white with red crosses, and she flew a Red Cross flag. The morning was clear, and any mistake as to her status was out of the question.

Her fate is thus narrated by an official of the Russian Red Cross Society:

> At about 8 o'clock in the morning, somebody on board shouted out, "Submarine boat." At first this news did not produce any panic; on the contrary, everybody rushed on deck to be the first to see the submarine. It never entered anybody's head to suppose that a submarine would attack a hospital ship, sailing under the flag of the Red Cross.

I went on to the upper deck, and noticed the periscope of a submarine moving parallel with the steamer at a distance of about 170 or 200 feet. Having reached a point opposite to the middle of the *Portugal*, the periscope disappeared for a short time, then reappeared, and the submarine discharged a torpedo. I descended from the upper deck and ran to the stern, with the intention of jumping into the sea. When, however, I noticed that most of the people on deck had life-belts, I ran into saloon No. 5, seized a life-belt, and put it on, but then I fell down, as the *Portugal* was sinking at the place where she was broken in two, while her stem and stern were going up higher all the time. All round me unfortunate sisters of mercy were screaming for help. They fell down, like myself, and some of them fainted. The deck became more down-sloping every minute, and I rolled off into the water between the two halves of the sinking steamer. I was drawn down deep into the whirlpool, and began to be whirled round and thrown about in every direction. While under the water I heard a dull, rumbling noise, which was evidently the bursting of the boilers, for it threw me out of the vortex about a sazhen, or 7 feet, away from the engulfment of the wreck. The stem and stern of the steamer had gone up until they were almost at right angles with the water, and the divided steamer was settling down. At this moment I was again sucked under, but I exerted myself afresh, and once more rose to the surface. I then saw both portions of

the *Portugal* go down rapidly and disappear beneath the flood.

It is needless to dwell upon the horrors of the scene which followed. One such catastrophe is very like another, and, thanks to the sublime consistency with which Germany has translated her principles of warfare into practice, the wholesale drowning of men and women, not only non-combatant, but devoted to deeds of mercy, has become so familiar an incident that we are only too glad to take its details for granted. Suffice it to say that 21 nurses were drowned, and 24 other members of the Red Cross staff, together with 21 Russian and 19 French seamen—a total death-roll of 85.

The first British hospital ship to fall a victim to Kultur was the *Britannic*, the largest British ship afloat. She was torpedoed on the morning of November 21, 1916, off the island of Zea, near the southern extremity of Attica. As she was outward bound she carried no wounded, but over 100 of her crew and of the medical staff lost their lives. The Germans admitted that she was torpedoed, but justified the act on the ground that she was carrying troops. The falsity of this allegation was proved by the clearest evidence. The total number of persons on board was 1,125, of whom 625 belonged to the crew, and 500 to the medical staff, con-

sisting of the following R.A.M.C. ranks and ratings:

Officers	25
Nurses	76
Sergeants, hospital orderlies, dispensers, laboratory attendants, operating-room attendants, skiagraphists, nursing orderlies, clerical staff . . .	399
	500

The Germans alleged that "the large numbers of persons on board . . . justified the forcible suspicion of the misuse of the hospital ship for purposes of transport"; whereupon it was pertinently retorted that, according to the "Handbuch für die deutsche Handelsmarine" for 1914, the total complement of the German liner *Imperator*, of about the same size as the *Britannic*, was 1,184 officers and men. Rightly considered, indeed, the figures amounted to an absolute disproof of the German allegation; for had the *Britannic* been carrying troops at all, she would certainly have carried not hundreds, but thousands.

Three days later the hospital ship *Braemar Castle* was sunk in the same waters; but it has not been clearly established whether her loss was due to a torpedo or to a mine.

The Germans had long prepared the way for

attacks on hospital ships by spreading groundless reports as to their wrongful use, which the Admiralty had more than once categorically denied. As to these falsehoods *The Times* wrote as follows:

> One of the first of them stated that Germans in Portsmouth Harbour had reported that two hospital ships started from there daily for France, deeply loaded, returning regularly unloaded. . . . It was therefore suggested that the ships carried war material and ammunition under the protection of the Red Cross. This palpable lie was possibly based on a substratum of truth, since hospitals require supplies;[1] but it indicated the eagerness of the German official mind to find excuses for unlawful acts.
>
> Later in the year the German Wireless elaborated other charges of the kind. Reports from Spain were said to have told of large numbers of hospital ships having been seen on their way to the Mediterranean. The ships had become much more numerous, it was alleged, since the activity of the U-boats in that sea. Sworn statements were also said to be in German possession that war materials had been carried in such ships, labelled "soft soap." Describing "the biggest fraud the British navy has practised," a German message, on November 21, 1915, spoke of 70 British transports having passed Gibraltar,

[1] Also, hospital ships "bunker" in England, and naturally return with their coal-bunkers depleted.

all "heavily laden and painted like hospital ships, on their way to Greek waters." In denying all these stories, the Admiralty said that there were 42 British hospital ships working to and from the Mediterranean, and although all were fully ballasted to secure safety and comfort, they were not "deeply laden," but, on the contrary, were generally some feet higher than deep draught. Other counts in the indictment were similarly disposed of. In view of the allegations, however, the hospital ship *Mauretania* was examined at Naples by the American, Danish, and Swiss consuls, who jointly signed a declaration that there were neither combatants nor warlike stores on board her.

These accusations show that German spies were conscientiously earning their pay by making suggestions which the German authorities were all the readier to believe, as they attributed to Britain a policy which, had the positions been reversed, they themselves would doubtless have adopted without the smallest hesitation.

When, in January, 1917, the German Government resolved upon its great gamble, and announced the policy of "unrestricted" U-boat warfare, it did not fail to disclaim even the restriction placed by international law upon the sinking of hospital ships. Its great aim was to reduce the world's tonnage, no matter to what

ends the tonnage was applied. It accordingly announced that it held "conclusive proof" of the misuse of hospital ships for the transport of munitions and troops,[1] and that therefore "the traffic of hospital ships . . . within lines drawn between Flamborough Head and Terschelling on the one hand, and from Ushant to Land's End on the other, would no longer be tolerated." To this the Foreign Office made the following reply:

> His Majesty's Government . . . most emphatically deny that British hospital ships have been used for the transport of munitions and troops, or in any way contrary to the Hague Convention for the adaptation of the principles of the Geneva Convention to maritime war.
>
> Under the Convention belligerents have the right to search hospital ships, and the German Government have therefore an obvious remedy in case of suspicion, a remedy which they have never utilized.
>
> From the German Government's statement that hospital ships will no longer be tolerated within the limits mentioned, only one conclusion can be drawn, namely, that it is the intention of the German Government to add yet another and more unspeakable crime against law and humanity to the long list which disgraces their record.

[1] For the Admiralty's detailed and crushing answer to these charges see White Paper, Miscellaneous No. 16 (1917), Cd. 8692.

Whether from some lingering scruple, or, more probably, from lack of opportunity, seven weeks passed before any attack—any successful attack, at any rate—was made upon a hospital ship. The *Asturias*, which had escaped destruction two years earler, was the first victim. She was torpedoed without warning on the night of March 20, when she was steaming with all navigating lights and with all the proper distinguishing Red Cross signs brilliantly illuminated. Of the medical staff 14 lost their lives, including one female staff nurse, and of the ship's company 29, including one stewardess.

Ten days later (March 30) the *Gloucester Castle* was torpedoed without warning in mid-channel. All the wounded, however, were successfully removed from the ship.

On the evening of April 17, two ships, the *Donegal* and the *Lanfranc*, were torpedoed without warning, while transporting wounded to British ports. The *Donegal* carried slightly wounded cases, all British, and 29 of these wounded men, along with 12 of the crew, lost their lives. The *Lanfranc*, in addition to 234 wounded British officers and men, carried 167 wounded German prisoners, a medical staff of 12, and a crew of 123. The lives lost were as follows: 2 wounded British officers, 11 British wounded of other ranks, 1 of the medical staff, of the crew, 2 wounded German officers, 13

German wounded of other ranks. One of the rescued British officers, writing in the *Daily Telegraph,* described the scene as follows:

> The *Lanfranc* was attacked by a submarine about 7.30 on Tuesday evening, just as we had finished dinner. A few of us were strolling to and fro on the deck when there was a crash which shook the liner violently. This was followed by an explosion, and glass and splinters of wood flew in all directions. I had a narrow escape from being pitched overboard, and only regained my feet with difficulty. In a few minutes the engines had stopped, and the *Lanfranc* appeared to be sinking rapidly, but to our surprise she steadied herself, and, after a while, remained perfectly motionless. . . . The moment the torpedo struck the *Lanfranc,* the Prussians made a mad rush for the life-boats. One of their officers came up to a boat close to which I was standing. I shouted to him to go back, whereupon he stood and scowled. "You must save us!" he begged. I told him to wait his turn. Other Prussians showed their cowardice by dropping on their knees and imploring pity. Some of them cried "Kamerad," as they do on the battlefield. I allowed none of them to pass me.
>
> Meanwhile, the crew and the staff had gone to their posts. The stretcher cases were brought on deck as quickly as possible, and the first boats were lowered without delay. Help had been summoned, and many vessels were hurrying to our assistance. In the

moments, while wounded Tommies—many of them as helpless as little children—lay in their cots unaided, the Prussian morale dropped to zero. Our cowardly prisoners made another crazy effort to get into a lifeboat. They managed to crowd into one, but no sooner had it been lowered than it toppled over. The Prussians were thrown into the water, and they fought with each other in order to reach another boat containing a number of gravely wounded British soldiers.

The behaviour of our own lads I shall never forget. Crippled as many of them were, they tried to stand at attention while the more serious cases were being looked after. And those who could lend a hand scurried below to help in saving friend or enemy. I have never seen so many individual illustrations of genuine chivalry and comradeship.

The German Government afterwards offered o call off its war on hospital ships on two imudent conditions: first, that all such ships hould pursue a route to be prescribed by Gerhany; second, that a Spanish officer should sail n each ship to guarantee that it was applied to o improper uses. These proposals were natually treated with contempt by the British Govrnment. Since the sinking of the *Donegal* and he *Lanfranc*, hospital ships no longer carry any istinctive marks, as these were found simply o attract the pirates.

The first Belgian relief ship to discover

that her mission implied no immunity was th *Harpalyce,* a four-masted steamer of nearly 6,00 tons, which was sunk on April 10, 1915, whil proceeding in ballast from Rotterdam to Nor folk, Virginia. She flew a white flag bearing th words "Commission for Belgian Relief" in suc large letters as to be visible at a great dis tance; and the same inscription was painte in large letters on her sides. In addition to a this, she carried a safe-conduct signed by th German minister at the Hague. But none c these precautions availed—she was torpedoe without warning, and sank before the boat could be lowered. Seventeen out of her cre of 44 lost their lives.

In the case of the Greek steamer *Embirico* neither her nationality (at the time when Greec was acting as the obedient tool of Germany nor the fact that she was carrying a cargo c maize for the Belgian Relief Commission, prove any safeguard to her. The crew were cast adri in two open boats at nightfall, though th weather in the channel was very stormy ar the sea ran high. One boat's crew, after suffe ing great dangers and hardships, was rescued b a Brixham trawler. The other boat was nev heard of again.

Since the proclamation of unrestricted frigh rulness, relief ships have been systematica destroyed. One of the first victims was t

torstad, a large Norwegian steamer, unhappily amous in her day as the ship which ran down he *Empress of Ireland* in the estuary of the t. Lawrence. She was now carrying a cargo f maize for the Belgian Relief Commission, and ore a stamped declaration by the German Consul at Buenos Ayres that she complied with he requirements of a Belgian Relief ship, and ould not be molested by German submarines. n the morning of March 8, 1917, she was fired pon, and stopped, displaying her big signboard ith the words "Belgian Relief Commission." he Germans satisfied themselves by questionng the crew that she was what she purported o be—a neutral ship with a neutral crew, enaged on an errand of mercy. (It is not quite lear whether the safe-conduct was actually xhibited or not.) Nothing availed to save her. he crew were forced to take to their boats, and he ship was sunk by gunfire. The submarine efused even to take the boats in tow. They rifted for thirty-six hours, and three men died f exposure before they were rescued.

The relief ship *Trevier* was sunk a month ater (April 4) off Scheveningen, and a shell was ired as the boats were being lowered, wounding ight men. The Norwegian steamer *Camilla*, in pite of a safe-conduct, was sunk without warnng; eight lives were lost, and the nine survivors, after drifting through five days of snow-

storms and heavy weather, were landed i Norway. Further instances of the same natu are thus summarised in the *Times History o the War* (Part 158, p. 65):

> Yet another relief ship sunk in April wa the *Carnetta*. Despite the fact that this vess carried papers signed by the German am bassador at Washington, she was not allowe to proceed when stopped by a U-boat i the North Sea. The signed papers wer shown to the submarine commander, but h refused to acknowledge them, and ordere the crew to leave the ship, which was sunk The two boats into which 23 sailors wer crowded were not allowed to take any sup plies with them. After six days of terribl suffering one of them reached Norway, bu not before five of the crew had died of gan grene or starvation. Two more died later. . . Similarly, the Norwegian - owned steame *Kongsli*, chartered by the Belgian Relief Com mission, was torpedoed while in a localit declared by the Germans to be a safe zone.

The systematic nature of these acts of de struction seems to show that they cannot b put down to the irresponsible truculence of in dividual U-boat commanders. There must hav been some political design in thus tightenin the hunger-screw upon unhappy Belgium.

CONCLUSION

THE purpose of these pages has been to give in brief compass some typical instances of the new element of almost fiendish cruelty introduced into maritime warfare by the German employment of the submarine as a commerce destroyer. Anything like an exhaustive record would have been impossible. In the first place, the materials are not available; in the second place, if they were, the story would run into many volumes. On the other hand, an honest effort has been made to give full credit to the legal and honourable aspect of U-boat warfare, and to overlook no recorded instance of humanity on the part of German commanders.[1]

No stress has been laid on the brighter side of the picture—the bravery, often amounting to heroism, displayed by British, Allied, and neutral merchant seamen, and by the passengers of torpedoed liners.

[1] A few—a very few—instances of some approach to humanity are noted in the official reports of the Norwegian Government, issued since these pages were in type.

This aspect of the case is worthy of a separate study. In part, indeed, it has already been ably dealt with by Mr. Alfred Noyes and other writers. There have been numberless cases like that of the Ellerman liner *City of Birmingham*, torpedoed without warning November 27, 1916, in which the conduct of the crew and passengers was admirable throughout. The master reports that "the women took their places in the boats as calmly as if they were going down to their meals, and when in the boats they began singing."

The incidents here related (except in respect to hospital and relief ships) almost all belong to the two and a half years before Germany declared her policy of "unrestricted" piracy and murder. In the interval between May, 1916, and January, 1917, the promise made to the United States that merchant vessels should not be sunk "without warning and without saving human lives" had been flagrantly violated in unnumbered instances; but great liners had enjoyed a relative immunity. Meanwhile Germany had treated the United States to an audacious U-boat "demonstration." On October 7, 1916, the submarine U 53 made its appearance at the fashionable seaside resort, Newport where the German ambassador was then staying. After exchanging with him (no doubt much useful information, and after having been

visited and admired by all Newport, the submarine took its departure within the prescribed twenty-four hours, and proceeded to place itself in the crowded fareway outside the entrance to the port of New York, and there to sink six ships—four British, one Dutch, and one Norwegian. In each case warning was given, and, thanks to the presence of American destroyers on the scene, all lives were saved. This proceeding was the more intolerable as the American Government had, during the previous winter, demanded and obtained the withdrawal of certain British and French cruisers which had been hovering in American waters. Although the United States made no formal protest against the exploit of U 53, President Wilson summoned Count Bernstorff to his country house in New Jersey, and told him that it must not be repeated. As a matter of fact, the adventurous submarine was no more heard of on that side of the Atlantic; but several incidents occurred in the course of the autumn to save America from falling under the illusion that Germany paid any special regard to her susceptibilities or to the lives of her citizens. When the *Marina* was torpedoed without warning in the Atlantic, six Americans were done to death, and the survivors were left to drift for more than thirty hours, in wild weather, before they were picked up by a patrol boat. The German excuse was

that the U-boat commander took her for a transport—a mistake which would have been avoided had he exercised his right of visit and search. Again, the American steamer *Chemung* was torpedoed with her flag flying; but the crew were all saved, the submarine having towed their boats some distance. Seventeen American lives were lost on board the *Russian*, but that ship really was a transport.

It was obvious from the first that Germany had no intention of being bound by her promise of May, 1916. She had constantly broken it, in fact; and the proviso with which she had guarded it (immediately repudiated, as we have seen, by President Wilson) showed that she was prepared at any moment to annul it in theory. She did not actually wish to take the extreme measure of nailing the black flag to the mast and announcing a campaign of "unrestricted" piracy. If the war on land had taken the course she hoped, or if the gamble of the Battle of Jutland had turned in her favour, this final breach with legality and humanity might have been avoided. But, disappointed in both these contingencies, she at last saw in the U-boat her sole salvation. Meantime, she had been feverishly building up a submarine fleet, adequate, as she supposed, to the great enterprise of starving Britain into submission; and at the end of January, 1917, she thought the

moment had arrived to strike her great knock-out blow.

Why should she shrink from throwing overboard the last pretence of any respect for human feeling, to say nothing of neutral rights? Let her but succeed, and all the priests and all the moralists (she thought) would rise up and call her blessed. Had not Nietzsche written: "Ye say it is the good cause which halloweth even war? I say unto you, it is the good war which halloweth every cause."

What followed is too well known to call for recapitulation in detail. On January 31, 1917, Germany proclaimed her intention of sinking at sight every ship encountered in the waters around the British Isles and France, and in the Mediterranean. America was notified of Germany's "expectation" that her Government would "warn American ships against entering the barred zones," and American citizens against entrusting their lives or goods to vessels bound for ports in the "blockaded" countries. By way of adding insult to injury, one American ship a week was to be allowed to have access to England, provided it was striped like a zebra and followed a prescribed route.

President Wilson's answer was immediate and emphatic. On February 3 he announced to Congress that he had handed Count Bernstorff his passports and had thus severed diplomatic

relations between the United States and the German Empire. Two months later (April 6) the United States was formally declared to be at war with Germany.

The U-boat had thus proved to be the immediate occasion, though, of course, not the sole cause, of one of the greatest events in history—the union of the whole English-speaking world in the struggle for humanity, democracy, and a lasting peace. This is such a wonderful achievement that maritime ruthlessness comes almost to wear the appearance of a providential means to an incomparably beneficent end. But though we may tell ourselves that those who have died in agony through German crimes have at least not died in vain, this reflection cannot, and ought not to, diminish the horror with which we regard the frenzy of national egoism, the sophistical perversion of all decent moral feeling, which has degraded a great Empire to the point of seeking to vindicate its claim to world power by means of a systematic course of murderous piracy such as the world, even in its darkest ages, never saw before.

THE END

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